

Christian Dogmatics.

by

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Third volume:

The Christian Life. The Perseverance to Salvation.
The Means of Grace. The Church. The Public Ministry.
Eternal Election. The Last Things.



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Foreword.

In this third volume of the Dogmatics, the doctrines of the Christian life, of the means of grace, of the Church, of eternal election and of the last things are presented. In editing this volume, too, I endeavored to offer a dogmatics that is "modern" in the right sense. In the [Foreword to the second volume](#) I have declared in more detail what I understand by a "modern" or "up to date" dogmatics. A dogmatics that rightly claims this predicate must have two main characteristics. First, it must draw Christian doctrine from Holy Scriptures alone, rejecting all human speculation, because Holy Scriptures, as the inspired and infallible Word of Christ, are the only source and norm of Christian doctrine until the Last Day. On the other hand, it must present the doctrines of Christ found in Holy Scriptures in the closest connection with the events of the Church, not only of the past, but especially of the present, and assert them in the face of contradiction.

The fact that the doctrine of the Christian life or, what is the same, the doctrine of sanctification and good works occupies a wide space is justified not only by the manifold forms of a Christian life as described in the Scriptures, but primarily also by the fact that the relationship between the Christian faith and the Christian life taught in the Scriptures

is not only shifted, but mostly completely reversed, especially in the present time. All who, with Rome, the Calvinistic Reformed, the Arminian Reformed, and the more recent Lutherans, partly limit and partly directly reject the [*satisfactio Christi vicaria*](#), necessarily place sanctification before justification in some way or form, because they assume a deficit in the atoning work of Christ. By this reversal of the relationship, they lose both justification and sanctification.

The doctrine of the means of grace occupies the widest space. Several reasons led me to offer here rather too much than too little. First, we live in the United States in a Reformed environment, and even the newer Reformed of the various trends separate "spirit" and "grace" from the means of grace on the same principle and with the same arguments that once moved Zwingli and comrades to separate from the church of the Reformation, and caused Calvin and his successors to maintain the separation. The evidence for this has been abundantly adduced. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that modern "experiential theology," which, after praising the inspiration of Scripture and the *satisfactio Christi vicaria*, is advocated precisely by "positive" Lutheran theologians of the present day, walks entirely along Reformed lines. Schneckenburger has already pointed this out, though not in a consistently accurate manner.¹⁾ The "faith in salvation" is not to come into being through the word of the gospel alone and to have its object in the word of the gospel, but is also to be generated and maintained by the so-called "historical" efficacy of Christ, which is conceived alongside the word of Christ. Ihmels also thinks in marked contrast to the Reformation's "understanding of revelation,"

1) [Comparative Presentation of the Lutheran and Ref. Doctrinal concepts I, 264-287.](#)

which he calls "intellectualistic.": "Even today, the only real faith in Jesus Christ is that which is imposed on man by his very appearance.²⁾ Thirdly, the Christian, and especially the Christian theologian who has been active in practical pastoral care, knows how difficult it is — even with objectively correct doctrine of the means of grace — for a conscience struck by the law of God to hold fast in faith to the grace offered in the means of grace. Think of Luther's lamentations in which he expresses how difficult it becomes for him in the challenge to refrain from all processes in him and outside of him and to cling in faith to the promise of grace in the Word of the Gospel alone. And yet this is the only way that can deliver us sinners from doubt and despair in the midst of temptation and the distress of death.

In the doctrine of the Church, it was first necessary to contrast the Roman and false Protestant "institutional concept" and to establish that the Christians are the church and therefore also the original owners of all spiritual goods and rights that Christ has given to his church here on earth. On the other hand, it had to be shown that in the Christian church there is absolutely no room for human doctrines and human rule, because Christ alone teaches and rules the church by means of His Word. The public ministry is not of human but of divine order, but beyond Christ's word it has nothing to teach or command.

The presentation of the doctrine of eternal election naturally takes into account the doctrinal controversy that has troubled the Lutheran Church in America and beyond for decades. I have repeatedly convinced myself anew that the doctrine of the eleventh article of the Formula of Concord,

2) [Zentralfragen 2, 1912, p. 89.](#)

which holds *universalis gratia* against Calvinism and *sola gratia* against Synergism, and which has therefore been called "untenable ground" by both sides, accurately reflects the doctrines of Holy Scriptures.

In the doctrine of the last things, chiliasm and the general conversion of the Jews have been treated in more detail, because there is an occasion for this in the present time.

The fact that this third volume appears much later than had been anticipated is partly due to the war conditions that have occurred in the meantime.

SOLI DEO GLORIA!

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F. Pieper.

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Misprint.

In Volume II, we would still like to correct the following printing errors:

- p. 7, line 22 v. o., is to be read *εργα* instead of *ελεος*.
- P. 25, line 16 v. u., is to be read *Helvetica* instead of *Helvetici* .
- p. 137, line 6 v. u., is to be read *the* instead of *the*.
- p. 217, line 15 v. u., is to be read *λόγου* instead of *λόγον*.
- p. 272, line 6 v. u., reads *property* instead of *fellowship*.
- p. 312, line 14 v. o., is to be read *plenariam* instead of *plenarium*.
- p. 451, line 10 v. u., is to be read *obedientiae* instead of *obedientia*.
- p. 488, line 12 v. u., is to be read *Gal.* instead of *Eph.*
- P. 492, Z. 12 v. o., is to be read *Jer. 31. 31 ff.* instead of *Zer. 31-34*.
- p. 568, line 2 v. u., is to be read *the* instead of *this*.

In Volume III, the following printing errors need to be corrected:

- P. 38, Z. 6 v. u., read *1 Pet. 2, 1* instead of *Col. 2, 1*.
- P. 136, line 15 v. u., read *satisfactio operis* instead of *satisfactio*.
- P. 216, lines 3 and 4 v. u., read *Jesel* instead of *Josel*.
- p. 337, line 2 v. u., read *III, 2, 10* instead of *IV, 10*.
- p. 344, line 3 v. u., read *teachers* instead of *doctrines*.
- P. 357, line 1 v. u., read *epistolam responsio* instead of *epistola*.
- P. 391, line 15 v. o., read *יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ* instead of *יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ* [HEBREW].
- p. 594, line 1 v. u., read *real* instead of *true*.

The Christian life

or

Sanctification and good works. ^

(De sanctificatione et bonis operibus.)

That the Christian life with all its inner and outer activities is a sure consequence, but also only a consequence, of faith in the reconciliation effected by Christ, has already been stated in the summary exposition of the "Order of Salvation" ([II, 488 ff.](#)). However, in connection with ambiguities and aberrations in the doctrine of justification, a whole series of uncertainties and manifest aberrations have also arisen in the doctrine of the Christian life or — which is the same thing — in the doctrine of sanctification and good works. Therefore, it is necessary that the whole chapter on sanctification and good works be presented in more detail from a number of points of view. Questions like these need to be discussed in more detail: What do we mean by sanctification? How do justification and sanctification differ? What relationship does sanctification stand to the attainment of salvation and the preservation of faith? By whom and through what means is sanctification wrought? Is sanctification perfect or imperfect in this life? What is to be said concerning the "necessity" and "freedom" of sanctification and good works? These and other questions, which are historical and serve the right understanding of the Christian life, will be dealt with in the following.

1. The concept of sanctification. ^

The word sanctification is used in both a broader and a narrower sense in Scripture and in the language of the Church.

Taken in a broader sense, it refers to the whole work of the Holy Spirit whereby people are set apart from sin

and become God's own again in order to live and serve God. In this sense, sanctification comprehends in itself the gift of faith and justification, sanctification as the inner transformation of man, the preservation in faith and also the complete renewal on the Last Day. Thus Christians are called from eternity elected to salvation 2 Thess. 2:13: εν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας; 1 Pet. 1:2: εν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος εἰς νπακοὴν καὶ ραντισμὸν αἵματος Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν, Where justification or forgiveness of sins is included in the ἀγιασμός, as appears from the special mention of the πίστις ἀληθείας and the ραντισμός αἵματος Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν. That Christians are called κλητοὶ ἅγιοι (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2) also comes *primo loco* from justification by faith. Also 1 Cor. 6:11, the "ye are sanctified," because it stands between "ye are washed" and "ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus." is best referred to justification. But because the Holy Spirit, through the effect of faith in the forgiveness of sins, also so transforms and renews man inwardly that he turns away from sin and serves God in good works, Scripture also refers to this intended consequence and effect of justification as "sanctifying" and "sanctification." Thus 1 Thess. 4:3-7: "This is the will of God, your sanctification (ἀγιασμός), that ye avoid fornication; ... and that no man go too far, nor take advantage of his brethren in trade; ... for God hath not called us to uncleanness, but to sanctification." Likewise, the holiness of life is addressed in 1 Thess. 5:23; 3:13: ἀμεμπτοι εν ἀγιωσύνη; 2 Cor. 7:1: επιτελοντες ἀγιω-σύνην; Eph. 4:24: "Put on the new man, created after God εν δικαιοσύνη και ὁσιότητι τῆς ἀληθείας." Matt. 19:28 calls the Christians' total and final deliverance from sin a rebirth (παλιγγενεσία). In this broader sense Luther also uses the word sanctification in his explanation of the third article. Large Catechism (455, 40. 41 [[Trigl. 689, 40 f. 2](#)]): "I believe that the Holy Spirit sanctifies me (*Spiritus Sancti opera me sanctificari*), as is his name. But by what does he do this, or what is his way and means of doing it? Answer: by the Christian Church, forgiveness of sins, resurrection of the flesh, and eternal life." Quenstedt says about the further concept of *sanctificatio* (II, 914): [Sanctificatio quandoque etiam late sumitur et iustificationem includit, ut Eph. 5:26;](#)

Hebr. 10:10; *alias vero stricte et sic cum renovatione strictedicta coincidit, ut Rom. 6:19, 22; 1 Thess. 4:3, 4, 7.*

Taken in a narrower sense, sanctification denotes the inner spiritual transformation or holiness of life, which is distinguished from justification as a consequence of it. Thus Rom. 6:22: "But now ye are free from sin, and have become God's servants" (namely, through justification)¹⁾ "ye have τον καρπὸν υμῶν εἰς αἰγιασμόν. V. 18-19: ἐλευθερωθέντες δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας (by faith in the gospel, v. 17, or by justification) ἐδονλώθητε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ ... παρεστήσατε τὰ μέλη υμῶν δούλα τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς αἰγιασμόν. About sanctification in the narrower sense, the Formula of Concord (619, 40 [*Trigl. 929, Sol. Decl., III, 40 f. 2*]) states: "In the same manner the order also between faith and good works must abide and be maintained, and likewise between justification and renewal, or sanctification. 41] For good works do not precede faith, neither does sanctification precede justification. But first faith is kindled in us in conversion by the Holy Ghost from the hearing of the Gospel. This lays hold of God's grace in Christ, by which the person is justified. Then, when the person is justified, he is also renewed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, from which renewal and sanctification the fruits of good works then follow."

For the definition of the terms, the following should also be pointed out: In the cited words of the Formula of Concord, "renewal" and "sanctification," are used as synonyms: "renewal" or sanctification." Sanctification is "renewal" inasmuch as in it a new kind comes into existence in contrast to the old kind innate in man, and renewal is "sanctification" inasmuch as the new kind consists in the fact that in it man is taken out of the service of sin and placed in the service of God. When in the same passage of the Formula of Concord sanctification and good works are distinguished as *antecedens* and *consequens*, sanctification is thought of as the principal new kind (καὶνός ἄνθρωπος, πνεῦμα) wrought by justification, from which the individual good acts or works flow. Thus Gal. 5:25-26: "If we live in the spirit, let us also

1) Cf. on the whole passage Rom. 6:15-23 Meyer, Philippi, [Stockhardt](#) [[Archive copy](#); [Schade/Stahlke translation](#)].

walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vainglory!" Gal. 6:1: "ὁμεῖς οἱ πνευματικοί, help him again εν πνευματι πραότητος ["Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness."]. Gal. 5:22, love, joy, longsuffering, etc., are represented as "fruit of the Spirit," καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος. In another respect, good works coincide with sanctification, namely, inasmuch as sanctification *in concreto* is accomplished by the individual good acts, by the inward and outward shunning of evil and by the inward and outward doing of good. The sanctification *in concreto* is just as little as the faith²⁾ an infused matter or a resting state (*habitus otiosus, status otiosus*), but continuous act or incessant activity, which is continuously caused and carried by the Holy Spirit.³⁾ This is expressed in Scripture by the fact that sanctification and good works are presented directly as fruits of faith in the grace of God in Christ. As it is said in Rom. 6:22: ἔχετε τὸν καρπὸν ὁμῶν εἰς ἁγιασμόν, so it is said in Tit. 3:8, 14 of those who have become faithful in God that they should devote themselves to good works, καλῶν ἔργων προῖτασθαι.⁴⁾ Thus Tit. 2:11 ff. the χάρις τον θεον ἡ οωτήριος, which appeared in Christ, is characterized as παιδεύονοα ἡμᾶς, ἵνα ἀρνησάμενοι την ἀοέβειαν ... σωφρόνως και ὀκαίοις και ενοεβος ζήσωμεν εν τῷ νν αιώνι ["teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world"].⁵⁾


2) Cf. the section on *fides actualis*. [II, p. 517](#), and the words of Walther, [p. 522](#): "Faith is a continuous activity, a continuous access. Only we do not know how it happens, for example, in sleep." [*Indices* (to Baier's comp., ed. Walther) by Theodor Bünger. St. L. 1890, [p. 130](#).]

3) Cf. the remarks of the dogmatists against the physical or substantial conception of sanctification. Quenstedt II, 917.

4) Προῖτασθαι with the genitive — *curam gerere alicuius rei*, to devote or dedicate oneself to a thing, e.g. τέχνης, art.

5) Already the old Lutheran theologians deal with the question in how far sanctification (or renewal) and good works are distinguished as *antecedens* and *consequens*, and in how far they factually coincide. Thus Baier ([III, 315](#)) states: *Bona opera partim ut finis et effectus ad renovationem sese habent, partim ad rationem formalem eius spectant. Renovatio enim formaliter* [according to its essence] *consistit in actibus aut operibus bonis et sanctis, quae viribus gratiae perficiuntur.* [[Google](#)] Of course, good works are then conceived as Quenstedt defines them (II, 1371): *Ratione ipsius operis, (bona opera) alia sunt interna, alia externa. Interna sunt interiores mentis cogitationes, voluntatis motus, cordisque affectus boni; externa sunt, quae in sensus hominum incurrunt et per exteriora verba et actiones externas sese exerunt. ... Theologus disserens de operibus per opera intelligit actiones morales, nec tantum externas, quae fiunt manu et lingua,*

2. The nature of sanctification in the strict sense as distinguished from justification. [^]

We repeat what has often had to be said in another binding: justification is an act of God on man (*circa hominem*), by which God declares a man to be justified who is not just in himself but unjust (ἀσεβής). It is true that the faith through which subjective justification takes place is in man. It is not the Holy Spirit who believes, but man who believes, through the action of the Holy Spirit. But the function of faith in justification is merely that it takes hold of a righteousness external to man, namely, the divine judgment of justification pronounced in the Gospel or the forgiveness of sins available through Christ's vicarious satisfaction and proclaimed in the Gospel. Faith, though it is in man, is nevertheless opposed in justification to all righteousness that is in man or man's own righteousness (*iustitia inhaerens*) (Rom. 4:5; Phil. 3:9). Thus, with respect to the righteousness of faith remains true: *tota nostra iustitia extra nos* (F. C. 622, 55 [[Trigl. 935, Sol. Decl., III, 55](#) actio est non in homine, sed circa hominem. On the other hand, sanctification in the narrower sense, that is, the sanctification that follows justification, is a divine act in man (*in homine*), by which God inwardly transforms the unjust man into a just one, terminologically expressed: an *iustitia inhaerens, habitualis, vitae, operum* works in man, in distinction from the *iustitia imputata* that is set by justification. That the sanctification flowing from faith consists in an inner moral transformation or in an *iustitia vitae, inhaerens*, is expressed especially in the statements of Scripture, where man who has become a believer is presented as the object

sed etiam internas et animi affectus motusque voluntatis. Est enim bonum opus, cum fit id, quod a Deo iubetur et eo affectu et modo, quo iubetur. [[Google](#)] Chemnitz points out (*Loci, L. de bonis operibus, de vocabulis p. m. 9 sqq.*) that, e.g., Rom. 4:5, faith and works are opposed to each other, and that therefore by the expression "good works" is signified the whole sphere of the new life in which faith is active. Finally he adds the admonition: *Si de rebus ipsis sit consensio, ne de vocabulis certamina non necessaria moveamus.*

of sanctification according to his essential nature, namely according to soul and body. Thus 1 Thess. 5:23: "May the God of peace sanctify you through and through (όλοτελειῇς), and your spirit wholly, together with soul and body" (καί ἡ ψυχὴ καί το σῶμα, both soul and body) "be kept blameless unto the future of our Lord Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 7:1: "Therefore, since we have such promises" (ch. 6:18), "beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and of the spirit⁶⁾ and continue in sanctification (ἐπιτελονντες αγωνοννψ) in the fear of God." 1 Cor. 6:20 the apostle opposes the defilement by fornication with the admonition: "Praise God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." Rom. 12:1-2: "I exhort you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable worship; and be not conformed to this world, but be ye changed (μεταμορφοῦσθε, be ye transformed) by the renewing of your mind."⁷⁾

3. The relationship between justification and sanctification in the strict sense. [△]

What the Scriptures and the Church, abiding by the Scriptures, teach about the relationship of justification or faith to sanctification and good works can be summarized in the following two main points: 1. There is an indissoluble connection (*nexus indivulsus*) between justification and sanctification. Where justification is, there is sanctification in every case. 2. But in this *nexus indivulsus* the last must not be put first, that is, sanctification or good works must not be placed before justification, but left in their position as a consequence and effect of justification. Both main points are expressed in the

6) Σάξ denotes here in the compilation with πνεύμα to indicate the essence of man the σῶμα of man.

7) The ἀνακαίνωσις τον νοός points directly to the inward transformation of the mind. — As for sanctification "in spirit and body," the dogmatists use the terminology: *subiectum quod sanctificationis sive renovationis est homo iustificatus. Subiectum quo est anima quoad facultates suas, intellectum, voluntatem et appetitum sensitivum, secundario etiam membra corporis, quatenus animae renovatae aut sanctificatae instrumenta sunt ad obeundas actiones sanctas necessaria.* [Google]

Formula of Concord when it describes the connection between justification and sanctification in this way (619, 41 [[Trigl 929, Sol. Decl., II, 41](#) [🔗](#)]): "Which is not to be understood as if justification and renewal were separated from each other in such a way that a true faith could be and exist for a time alongside an evil intention, but only the order is indicated here, how one precedes the other or succession (*ordine causarum et effectuum, antecedentium et consequentium ita distribuuntur*). For it remains true that Luther rightly said: 'Faith and good works rhyme and send themselves together'; but it is faith alone that takes hold of the blessing, without 'works' it is never and at no time alone." Because it is of such great importance to maintain this right relationship between justification and sanctification in the face of all confusion, here follows a more detailed explanation of the two main points. In the struggle that the Lutheran Church had to wage in the sixteenth century in the so-called Antinomian and Majorist disputes, it was also necessary, on the one hand, to maintain the *nexus indivulsus* between faith and works, and on the other hand, to reject the inversion of the relationship between faith and works.

First of all, the *nexus indivulsus* is to be noted. Wherever the Holy Spirit has worked faith in the gospel in a man, he also immediately works sanctification and good works in the same man through faith.⁸⁾ Although justification and sanctification are to be distinguished *ordine causarum et effectuum*, they do not fall apart in time.⁹⁾ Therefore the sentence is correct: Where there is no sanctification and no good works, there is no faith. All kinds of people let this

8) This was also the case with the thief on the cross, Luke 24:40-41.

9) The Formula of Concord says (619, 41 [[Trigl 931, Sol. Decl., III, 41](#) [🔗](#)]) that the faith that takes hold of the blessing without works "is yet never and at no time alone." [Carpzov](#), in [Baier III, 301](#): *Statim ac eo ipso momento, quo fides accenditur in nobis et per eam, quatenus rem iustificam oblatam apprehendit, nos iustificamur, etiam mente et corpore renovamur*. [[Google](#)] [Quenstedt II, 896](#): *Regeneratio, iustificatio, unio et renovatio tempore simul sunt et quovis puncto mathematico arctiores, adeo ut divelli et sequestrari nequeant, cohaerent. Secundum nostrum tamen concipiendi modum (conceptual) ordine prior est regeneratio et iustificatio unione ista mystica*. [[Google](#)] [Quenstedt](#) here grasps *regeneratio* as generation of faith, l. c., p. 897.

nexus indivulsus not apply. We already reminded that newer theologians of the critical trend shake their heads when they see that the apostle Paul binds with the *actus forensis* of justification, i.e. with the *iustitia imputata*, an inner moral transformation or an *iustitia inhaerens sive vitae*. They find this connection unthinkable. Therefore, they believe themselves justified in the assumption that the Apostle got mixed up unawares in "two streams of thought", the Jewish and the Hellenistic, which in reality do not go together.¹⁰⁾ But also newer theologians of the positive trend do not trust the *iustitia fidei imputata* to be causal in relation to sanctification. In order to ensure sanctification according to their opinion, they insist that faith itself in justification is not merely instrumental, but is conceived as an "ethical act" or as the "germ" of sanctification. Furthermore, we must unfortunately confess that even those Christians who in theory hold the indissoluble connection between justification and sanctification still stand in constant danger, according to the flesh, of forgetting this binding in practice.

In contrast to this, the Scriptures powerfully inculcate the fact that sanctification is inseparably bound up with justification. Even if we cannot declare the how or "the psychological mediation" in more detail, the "that" or the fact stands firm. After the Apostle has presented justification in the Epistle to the Romans from chap. 3:21 to the end of the 5th chapter as *actus forensis*, as a mere declaration of righteousness,¹¹⁾ and to that extent as a mere declaration of righteousness, that he contrasts faith, through which justification is accomplished, with every moral quality in man,¹²⁾ he himself directs chap. 6:1 the attention to the question, how it stands with such a justification with the life in sin, and answers the question to the effect that the justified can of course no longer live in sin, with the reasoning that the justified are dead to sin. The apostle presents this state of affairs as a given and established fact in the section chap. 6:2-11. He closes the section with the summarium in v. 11: "Hold yourselves to the fact that

10) Cf. the comments on p. 488 ff.

11) Holtzmann rightly states ([II, 153](#)) that Rom. 5:12-21 also deals only with justification, not already with sanctification.

12) Rom. 4:5; 3:28; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9.

ye are dead to sin, but alive to God in Jesus Christ," νεκρούς μὲν εἶναι τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, ζώντας δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦν. The thought that the justified could still live to sin and not to God would be—so the apostle states the matter—as absurd as if we would still trust the dead, who have passed from this life and lie in their graves, to appear and walk in this earthly life. Thus there can be no doubt that the apostle Paul indissolubly binds sanctification, conceived as moral transformation or *iustitia inhaerens*, with justification, conceived as *actus forensis* or mere imputation of righteousness.¹³⁾ — But what about the how or the "psychological mediation"? The matter is not quite as inconceivable as Pfleiderer, Holtzmann and others think. We even have an analogy in the field of natural life. Proven love generates counter-love. Now it stands, as is well known, that God has shown a wonderfully great love to man. God thus (ὄντω) loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.¹⁴⁾ In this (ἐν τούτῳ) stands the love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.¹⁵⁾ God proves (συνίστησι) his love toward us, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.¹⁶⁾ If men could be convinced of this love of God towards them, it would really not be so strange, but rather natural, that they should love God again, who first and so wonderfully loved them, and shun sin for love of him. Everything depends only on whether there is a means or a way by which men can be made completely certain or convinced of this love of God. Of course, by nature man does not believe this love, but considers it foolishness.¹⁷⁾ This love cannot be demonstrated either, as the apostle Paul explicitly reports.¹⁸⁾ But when it is proclaimed as a fact in the word of the gospel, then it is the business

13) Holtzmann [II, 166](#): "With the passage from the sphere of the law into the sphere of grace, the dominion of sin has reached its definite end for the believer."

14) Joh. 3:16. 15) 1 Joh. 4:10.

16) Rom. 5:8: 17) 1 Cor. 2:14; 1:23.

18) 1 Cor. 2:4: ὁ λόγος μου καὶ τό κήρυγμά μου οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖς σοφίας λόγοις.

of the Holy Spirit until the Last Day, to work faith through this proclamation, Rom. 10:17: ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἀκοῆς.¹⁹⁾ And when this faith in the gospel, or in the love of God in Christ, is present in a man's heart by the action of the Holy Spirit, then he has no more need of love to God and enmity against sin. Then justification and sanctification are "psychologically mediated" and no longer represent a "two-layered doctrinal formation." ¶ This is how justification and sanctification are bound together for the apostle Paul. Gal. 2:20: "What I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." So also it seems to all Christians not "two-layered," but quite "unified" and self-evident, when John charges them, "Let us love him, for he first loved us!"²⁰⁾ and Paul, "He [Christ] therefore died for all, that they which live should not live unto themselves henceforth, but unto him who died for them, and rose again."²¹⁾ This psychology also corresponds to the experience or "experience" of Christians. The more certain they are of the grace of God and of the heavenly inheritance, the more lively and strong is in them the sense of serving God and of striving for what is above. "If thou comfort my heart, I will run the way of thy commandments."²²⁾ Love for one's neighbor is also psychologically imparted in this way—that is, by faith in the love of God which appeared in Christ—as John also expressly teaches, "Beloved, if God so (ὥτως) loved us, we ought (ὀφείλομεν) also to love one another,"²³⁾ and Paul, "Walk in love, even as Christ loved us, and offered himself for us a gift and a sacrifice, to God a sweet savor."²⁴⁾ Thus, love of God and neighbor, that is, the fulfillment of the law,²⁵⁾ "spiritual-natural," *nexu indivulso*, is bound up with justifying faith. So justification and sanctification are really not two heterogeneous "streams of thought" running abruptly side by side, but they occur in clear and sure psychological mediation with each other. — Where does it come from.

19) Joh. 16:14; 1 Cor. 2:5.

20) 1 Joh. 4:19. Or also ἀγαπῶμεν, indicative: "We love him", whereby the self-evidence of love for God is emphasized even more.

21) 2 Cor. 5:15.

22) Ps. 119:32.

23) 1 John 4:11.

24) Eph. 5:2. 25) Matt. 22:34-39; Rom. 13:8-10.

that faith is not thought to have a causal relationship with sanctification? The reason for this is that one has in mind a faith that man makes wholly or partly for himself, for which man decides for himself, for which man is determined by scientific evidence. One rightly feels that this faith has no causal relationship to sanctification. Luther and the Lutheran Confession also admit that faith, which is a human power, is a completely impotent thing. But it stands quite differently with faith, which without human cooperation, by the Holy Spirit's action alone, in the midst of the terrors of conscience, "agrees to the promise of God, in which for Christ's sake forgiveness of sins and justification are freely offered." *Illa fides, quae iustificat, ... est assentiri promissioni Dei, in qua gratis propter Christ offertur remissio peccatorum et iustificatio.* [[Google](#)]²⁶⁾ This faith infallibly establishes the connection with sanctification and good works. The Apology takes this psychologically: "This same faith, when each one believes for himself that Christ is given for him, obtains forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake alone. ... And because the same is in righteous repentance, restores our hearts even in the terror of sin and death, by the same we are born again, and through faith the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts, who renews our hearts, that we may keep God's law, love God rightly, fear assuredly, neither waver nor doubt, that Christ is given to us, that he hears our calls and supplications, and that we may rejoice in God's will even in the midst of death."²⁷⁾ Likewise Luther. While he says of *fides acquisita*: "As it [*fides acquisita*] is a human fiction and a dream, which the reason of the heart never experiences, so it does nothing and no improvement follows afterwards," [[St. L. XIV, 99 \(Trigl. 941, F. C., Sol. Decl., IV, 10 ff. !\[\]\(4658fc881287bc22b537ed0517e70445_img.jpg\)](#))] so he says of the faith wrought by the Holy Spirit: "Faith is a divine work in us, which changes us and gives us new birth from God, Jn. 1:13, and kills the old Adam and makes us completely different men of heart, courage, mind and strength, and brings the Holy Spirit with it. Oh, it is a living, busy, active, powerful thing about faith, that it is impossible that it should not work good without cessation. Nor does it ask whether good works be done,


26) Apology 95, 48. [[Trigl. 135, Apol., IV, 48 !\[\]\(b2d0dd9b8263e368c8d7819add8f75d7_img.jpg\)](#)] 27) Apol. 95, 46. [[Trigl. 135, 45 !\[\]\(6d3cc941ce0cf77d166299a33c31bf7a_img.jpg\)](#)]


but before you ask, it has done them and is always doing them. ... Faith is a living, bold confidence in God's grace, so certain that it would die a thousand times over. And such confidence and knowledge of divine grace makes one cheerful, defiant and merry toward God and all creatures, which the Holy Spirit does in faith. Therefore, without compulsion, man becomes willing and joyful to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer all things for the love and praise of God, who has shown him such grace, so that it is impossible to separate works from faith, indeed as impossible as burning and shining can be separated from fire." — ¶ Unnecessarily, a difficulty has been found in the fact that sanctification is derived once from faith²⁹⁾ and then again from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit³⁰⁾. The fact is this, that the Holy Spirit as *causa efficiens* of sanctification works it through faith as *instrumentum*. By maintaining faith in the grace of God or the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake in the human heart, the Holy Spirit also inscribes love for God and all the Christian virtues, that is, the whole law of God, in the heart³¹⁾ Thus also, from this point of view, the indissoluble binding between justification and sanctification again comes into the light. There is also no contradiction in the fact that in Scripture faith is once described as an effect of the Holy Spirit³²⁾ and then the reception of the Spirit is again presented as being mediated by faith.³³⁾ In the former case, the Holy Spirit is addressed insofar as he first approaches man from outside through the word of the gospel and brings forth faith. In the latter case, the Holy Spirit is addressed insofar as He has already made His dwelling in the human heart. Having first wrought faith, the Holy Spirit does not turn back, but enters the human heart with faith, now to maintain from within faith in justification, and by maintaining faith to bring forth sanctification and good works as fruits of faith. This is the *nexus indivulsus* between justification and sanctification or between faith and works.

28) St. L. XIV, 99 f. 29) Gal. 5:6. 30) Rom. 8:9.

31) Gal. 2:20. 32) 1 Cor. 2:4-5. 33) Gal. 3:2, 5.


But with this *nexus indivulsus* the hindmost is not to be put first. This is the second main point, which is also to be explained in more detail. Sanctification is always to be taught only as *consequens*, never as *antecedens* of justification. This divine order of things all men by nature hold to be perverse. According to all the concepts they have of religion, the [chariot](#) belongs [before the horses](#), that is, works before justification. Thus all heathens believe³⁴⁾ and all apostate Jews.³⁵⁾ This is the doctrine of the papal church under Christian pretense, while at the same time it pronounces a curse on all those who do not want to put the cart before the horse.³⁶⁾ This is also the doctrine of all Protestants, who in various ways and under various names make good works, "ethical" deeds, right conduct, etc. precede conversion, justification, or at least the attainment of salvation, either expressly as *causa* or as *conditio sine qua non*.³⁷⁾ Whence this general inversion of the divine order? It has its ground in *opinio legis*, which is innate in all men, and which they do not renounce until they have been taught by God from his doctrine by the action of the Holy Spirit, and have renounced all thoughts of their own in matters of religion.³⁸⁾ And because all Christians still have the flesh about them, they too are still inclined to give works a place before justification.³⁹⁾ Finally, it must be admitted that even those teachers who correctly determine the relationship between faith and works in theory are tempted to lose sight of this relationship in practice. When they see that the doctrine of grace is misused for neglect in good works, they may well succumb to the temptation to be silent about the οἰκτιρμοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ ["mercies of God"] (Rom. 12, 1) as the only source of good works and to approve, at least [tacito consensu](#), even such

34) Acts 17:22-23; 1 Cor. 8:1; 10:20. Apology 122, 85. [[Trigl. 177:Apol., III, 85](#) 

35) Rom. 10:3. The Apology 122, 86. [[Trigl. 177, ibid., 86](#) 

36) Trid., sess. VI, can. 24: "If anyone says that these works" (namely, the aforementioned good works) "are only fruits and signs of the attained justification, but not a cause of its increase, let him be accursed!"

37) Arminians, Synergists, Majorists, modern theologians of negative and positive trends.

38) The Apology 134, 144. 145. [[Trigl. 197, ibid., 144-145](#) 

39) Luther on Ps. 131. [St. L. IV, 2077 f.](#)

works as have not come about as fruits of justification.⁴⁰⁾ This matter is to be taken up again under the chapter "The Good Works of the Heathen".

All overt and covert reversals of the order between justification and sanctification are characterized by Scripture as pernicious blindness and folly.⁴¹⁾ Scripture instructs us that in every case where works are placed before justification, two things are accomplished. First, the opposite of justification, the curse, is achieved.⁴²⁾ Second, the very opposite of sanctification and good works, the increase of sin, is also achieved. Either sanctification and good works are left standing in the back or second place, namely as fruits of faith in the gospel, or they are not present at all. This presents Scripture from several points of view. He who does not believe justification by faith without works of the law still stands under the law. The law, however, does not dethrone sin, but only makes it mobile.⁴³⁾ It does not impart sanctification, but — out of guilt of the *οἰσῆ* — hypocrisy⁴⁴⁾ or despair.⁴⁵⁾ Further, he who does not stand in the faith of the gospel, that is, has not been justified before God by faith without works, is not governed by the Holy Spirit but by the devil. Therefore, he does not do the holy will of God, but thinks, wills, and does what the devil works in him.⁴⁶⁾ Therefore, both the practical need of the individual Christian, insofar as he is concerned about his Christian faith and life, and the practical need of the Church, insofar as she has to teach faith and sanctification, demand that on the one hand the *nexus indivulsus* between justification and sanctification, and on the other hand also the *ordo antecedentium et consequentium* be clearly recognized and precisely recorded. This is also the purpose of the further explanations.

40) I have in mind here, for example, the widespread bad practice of collecting church contributions through "sales," "socials," etc., on the grounds that without following this method the necessary "good works" would not be done.

41) Gal. 3:2. 42) Gal. 3:10.


43) Rom. 7:5, 7-11. Luther [VIII, 1455](#).

44) Jer. 31:32; Luke 18:11-12.

45) Acts 16:27.

46) Eph. 2:2; Tit. 3:3; Luke 11:21.

4. The effecting cause of sanctification. [^]

God works, as faith, so also sanctification with his infinite power,⁴⁷⁾ but in such a way that the Christian according to the new man is active or cooperates in it (*cooperatur*). Whereas in the origin of faith or in conversion the man only suffers the effect of God without being active (*pure passive :se habet*), in sanctification he is active or cooperative (*active se habet sive cooperatur*). The cooperation in sanctification must be understood correctly. It does not happen in such a way that God's action and the action of the new man are coordinated, "as two horses together pull a cart " (F. C. 604, 66 [Trigl. 907, 66 X]), but in such a way that the action of the new man is completely and always subordinated to God's action, always happens only *dependentem a Deo*. Still differently expressed. It is the Holy Spirit who sets the new man in activity as his living organ and keeps him in activity. All moments are summarized in the words of the Formula of Concord (604, 65. 66 [Trigl. 907, Sol. Decl., II, 65 f. 

47) 1 Thess. 5:23. 24: Αὐτός ο θεός ἀγιάσαι νῆας ὀλοτελεῖς — πιστός ὁ καλῶν νῆας, δς και ποιήσει. The Holy Spirit, who dwells in Christians as in His temple (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19), impels them to the killing of the business of the flesh (Rom. 8:13-14). Christians are God's workmanship (ποίημα, creature) even insofar as they do good works (Eph. 2:10).

The question has been discussed whether in the individual spiritual movements and the individual good works the initiative comes from the new man or from the Holy Spirit. Scripture clearly indicates the latter, also tracing every good thought to the authorship of God, 2 Cor. 3:5: οὐχ ὅτι ἱκανοὶ ἐομεν ἀφ' εαυτῶν λογίσασθαι τι ὡς ἐξ εαυτῶν.⁴⁸⁾

5. The internal processes (*motus interni*) under which sanctification takes place. ^

Through faith in Christ, that is, in the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, without works of the law, a new man (καινός άνθρωπος, Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10; ὁ ἐσωθεν ἄνθρωπος [“the inward man,”], 2 Cor. 4:16) has come into existence. This new man wills only what God wills, Rom. 7:22: συνήδομαι τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἐσω ἄνθρωπον [“I delight in the Law of God after the inward man.”]. The Christian is therefore perfectly holy, νεκρός τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ and ζών τῷ θεῷ [“dead unto sin, but alive unto God”], Rom. 6:1-11, inasmuch as he is new man or born again. But in the Christian, throughout life here on earth, the old sinful nature or man still remains (παλαιός ἄνθρωπος, Eph. 4:22; ὁ ἐξω ἄνθρωπος [“our outward man”], 2 Cor. 4:16; τὸ σῶμα τῆς ἁμαρτίας, Rom. 6:6; ἡ σὰρξ [“my flesh”], Rom. 7:18). This old man is and remains devoted to sin, Rom. 7:18: οὐκ οἶκέϊ ἐν ἐμοί, τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου, ἀγαθόν, and contends against the new man, Gal. 5:17: ἡ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος [“The flesh lusteth against the Spirit”]. In this state of affairs sanctification always takes place only in such a way that the Christian, in so far as he is a new man, struggles against himself, in so far as he is still an old man, and the new man with his good will and deeds prevails over the evil will and deeds of the old man. According to the Scriptures, therefore, sanctification has a negative and a positive side. According to the negative side, it consists in putting off the old man; according to the positive side, it consists in putting on the new man.⁴⁹⁾ This is the struggle of the spirit against the flesh.

With regard to the struggle of the spirit against the flesh, several remarks are in order: 1. This struggle is not

48) Cf. Calov on this passage

49) Eph. 4:22-24: ἀποθέσθαι τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον — καὶ ἐνδυνασθαι τὸν καινόν ἄνθρωπον.

a sign that the Christians have fallen from grace, as they probably think in the temptation, but on the contrary a sign of the state of grace. Only where the struggle has ceased, and the flesh has come to dominion, has the fall from grace occurred. ¶ 2. Since the old man of Christians also remains, that is, no more pious than the flesh of unbelievers, Christians, on the one hand, should not be so surprised that the lusts of complete unbelief and the grossest sins are still stirring in them (Rom. 7:18; 1 Thess. 4:3-6), on the other hand keep in mind that the fight of the spirit against the flesh cannot consist in improvement, education or cultivation, but always only in a crucifixion and killing of the flesh or the old man.⁵⁰⁾ To this treatment of the old man are the admonitions of Scripture: Rom. 8:13: τὰς πράξεις τον σώματος θανατονν; Gal. 5:24 : την σάρκα ατάνρονν συν τοίς παθήμασιν και τάς ἐπιθυμίαις ["They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts"]; Col. 3:5: νεκροί)ν τὰ μέλη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, πορνείαν, ακαθαρσίαν κτλ ["Mortify your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, etc."]; 1 Cor. 9:27: υποπαύξειν τὸ σῶμα και δονλαγωγεῖν ["I keep under my body and bring it into subjection"]; Matt. 18:8-9, χεῖρα και πόδα σκανδαλίζοντας εκκόπτειν ["If thy hand or tiiy foot offend thee, cut them off. . . If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out."], ¶ 3. The struggle of the spirit against the flesh is difficult and painful, as can be seen from the scriptural expressions "to kill," "to crucify," "to cut off hand and foot," and from the fact that the flesh, which is thus to be treated, does not lead a special existence, but still clings to its own self (Heb. 12:1). It is comforting in the difficult and painful struggle, as Luther often reminds us, that also the "great saints", especially also the high apostle Paul, felt the heaviness and the painfulness of this struggle, as is evident from the lamentation Rom. 7:24: ταλαίπωρος ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος [O wretched man that I am!"].⁵¹⁾ ¶ (4.) Scripture assures us that Christians will emerge victorious from this struggle if they abide in grace and God's Word, and thereby yield to the Holy Spirit

50) Meyer remarks on 2 Cor. 7:1, "Never, therefore, is it demanded that the σάρξ be or become holy."

51) Luther IX, 1292: "No one among you who suffers and is tempted bodily or spiritually, even in the highest and most terrible way, should think that he suffers something special, new and strange, or as if no one before or beside him had felt and endured such severe and terrible affliction; no, it is not you alone. Your brethren who live before you and with you have experienced the same and even greater and more severe things."

the opportunity to become and remain effective in them with His divine power. This includes scriptural statements such as 2 Cor. 12:10: "When I am weak, then I am strong"; Luke 18:27: "What is impossible with men is possible with God"; the whole passage 2 Cor. 4:7 ff. about the treasure in frail vessels, "so that the abundant power may be of God and not of us"; but the divine power becomes effective through the Word of God; Eph. 6:17: "Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God"; Jn. 15:7: "If my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you"; Rom. 8:37: "In all these things we greatly overcome" (νπερνικώμεν, we are victorious, win a shining victory) "for the sake of him that loved us." The apostle describes the victorious course in detail 2 Cor. 4:8 ff. Paul uses puns in the description, some of which are difficult to render in the translation: Ἐν παντὶ ὑλιβόμενοι, ἀλλ' ον στενοχωρονμενοι, ἀπορονμενοι, ἀλλ' ονκ εξαπορονμενοι, διωκόμενοι, ἀλλ' ονκ εγκαταλειπό μενοι, καταβαλλόμενοι, ἀλλ' ονκ ἀπολλνμενοι, πάντοτε την νέκρωοιν τον Ἰησον εν τώ σώματι περιφέροντες, ἵνα και ἡ ζωή τον Ἰησον εν τω οώματι ημών φανερωῷ, ἀει γάρ ημεῖς οι ζώντες εις θάνατον παραδιδόμε & αα διά Ἰησονν, ἵνα και ἡ ζωή τον Ἰησον φανερωῷ εν τή θνητή σαρκι ημών. ["We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."] Luther writes on 1 Pet. 6:9 ([St. L. IX, 1108](#)) about the use of the Word of God in the struggle of the Spirit against the flesh: "Be sober and watchful, but to this end that the body may be sent" (Luther often speaks of how the body is to be treated in the struggle of the Spirit against the flesh, but he does not overestimate this *paedagogia externa*). "But with this the devil is not yet slain; it is only for this reason that you give the body the less cause to sin. The right sword is that you are strong and firm in faith. If you take hold of the Word of God in your heart and hold fast to it with faith, the devil cannot win but must flee. So if you can say, "This is what my God has said, I will stand up," you will see that he will soon go away; for then all unwillingness, evil desire, anger, avarice, melancholy and doubt will go away. But the devil is crafty and does not like to let you do this, and he reaches out to take the sword out of your hand; when he makes you lazy, so that the body becomes clumsy and inclined to evil, he soon snatches the sword out of your hand.

He did the same to Eve; she had the Word of God; if she had held on to it, she would not have fallen. But when the devil saw that she held the word so loosely, he tore it out of her heart, so that she let it go; and so he had won. (2 Cor. 11:3; Gen. 3:4, 13.) So St. Peter has instructed us enough on how to argue with the devil. It does not cost much running to and fro, nor any work that you can do, but no more than that you hang on the word by faith. When he comes and wants to drive you into a melancholy because of sin, just take hold of the word of God that promises forgiveness of sins, and ponder on it, and he will soon let go." ¶ 5. An important rule of battle is to immediately oppose the evil act of the flesh that is stirring up with the corresponding good act, for example, the praise of God to the murmuring against God, and the thoughts of God as revealed in the Scriptures to one's own and other men's thoughts and judgments on points of doctrine and life.⁵²⁾ Here again it must be remembered how important it is for the Christian not only to deal constantly with God's Word, but also to memorize as many passages of Scripture as possible, so that he can immediately counter the attacks of the flesh, the world and the devil, when and where they occur, with the Scriptural Word that belongs to the matter. Christ teaches us this victorious way of fighting by his own example Matt. 4:1-11.

52) How true this is is certainly learned by experience. One should not wait with the praise of God until one feels the desire to do so in the heart, but one should catch the words "Now give thanks to God" in the midst of the discontent, and grumbling will disappear. If death seems so terrible to us, scriptural words such as: "This very day you will be with me in paradise" correct the terrible picture. If in a certain affliction we think we have sufficient cause for quite deep and lasting sadness, words like, "Rejoice in the Lord always (πάντοτε)!" help. Also dangerous is the thought that temptation is too heavy and that we must perish in it. This erroneous notion is banished, e.g., by 1 Cor. 10:13: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above your ability." As far as doctrines in particular are concerned, even Luther confesses: "I have often not been able to solve the devil's argument." (IX, 1339.) But the error became powerless and gave way, as the mist gives way to the sun, as soon as the Holy Spirit reminded him of the words of Scripture dealing with the doctrines under dispute. "The word they shall let stand." Cf. Luther's mighty exposition on the ability not only of teachers but of all Christians to reject all error as soon as they place themselves on God's Word without gloss. (On 1 Pet. 3:15. St. L. IX, 1235 ff.)

6. The means by which sanctification is wrought. [^]



The means of sanctification, precisely speaking, is only that by which the old man is put to death and the new man is strengthened, that is, the gospel (the means of grace), not the law. It has already been stated that only the gospel dethrones sin, while the law increases it.⁵³⁾ However, the law also comes into use in sanctification insofar as it serves the gospel. Carpzov, in contrast to inaccurate talk of some Lutheran theologians, takes the view that only the gospel (*solum evangelium*) is the means (*organum*) of regeneration and sanctification. The law is "only added to the gospel for a certain use" (*assumi*).⁵⁴⁾ If we ask in what respect the law is "added" to auxiliary services, the following is to be said: Because the Christian still has the flesh about him and is inclined according to the flesh to disregard the clinging sin, his sin and damnability must still be revealed to him through the law. For where the knowledge of sin ceases, faith in forgiveness or faith in the gospel also ceases.⁵⁵⁾ But with that the source of sanctification and good works would be blocked. According to the old man, the Christian is further inclined to make up his own mind about a holy life pleasing to God, even to take sins for virtues and virtues for sins. In this clouding of the knowledge of God's holy will, which proceeds from the flesh,


53) Rom. 6:14; 7:5. 6; Jer. 31:31 ff.

54) *Disputatt. isagog.*, p. 1146 sq.; in Pastor [III](#), 308 sq. Baier also speaks inaccurately when he expresses himself thus: *Causa instrumentalis (renovationis) ex parte Dei sunt verbum legis et evangelium*, thus law and gospel coordinated. Baier's expression is also ambiguous: *Lex concupiscentias carnis in renatis reliquas supprimit*. [[Google](#)] The *supprimere* is true only with respect to certain external outbreaks of the flesh (F. C. 645, 24 [[Trigl. 969](#), [F. C.](#), [Sol. Decl.](#), [VI](#), 24 [☞](#)]), not with respect to the *concupiscentiae carnis*. Baier appeals to Gal. 5:15-16 for the suppression of the lusts of the flesh by the law. But in this passage the suppression of the lusts of the flesh is ascribed to the Spirit, not to the law. The quotation from Carpzov given by Walther is meant as a correction of Baier. Carpzov says: *Lex quidem in renovatione dicitur "inscribi in corda," Jer. 31:33, sed non inscribere. Inscriptio fit per evangelium solum. Ex quo solo renascimur, ex eo etiam renovamur. Iam ex solo evangelio renascimur. Ergo ex solo evangelio etiam renovamur. Neque obest, quod lex aliquem usum in renovatione praestet*. [[Google](#)]

55) Cf. Luther against the Antinomians. [St. L., XX, 1646](#).



the law also serves the Christian as a "rule," that is, it continually shows him the right form of a life pleasing to God and the truly Christian works.⁵⁶⁾ But the power to do the right works and refrain from the evil ones always comes only from the gospel. Paul exhorts Christians to present their bodies to God for sacrifice (*παραστήσαι*), *διὰ των οἰκτιρῶν* τον θεοῦ ["by the mercies of God"], Rom. 12:1, and to love toward God and one another John urges on the grounds, *οτι αὐτός πρώτος ἡγάπησεν ἡμᾶς* ["because He first loved us"] 1 Jn. 4:19. 11. The gospel must in every case inscribe the law on the heart.⁵⁷⁾ Luther reminds us that pastors become guilty of the deficit in sanctification and good works by seeking to effect sanctification and good works by the law instead of by the gospel.⁵⁸⁾ — The question has been dealt with as to how the particular ways of life — poverty and wealth, sickness and health, misfortune and happiness — stand in relation to sanctification. It is to be said: these external things do not in themselves contribute to sanctification, but inasmuch as they lead in God's hand⁵⁹⁾ to God's Word and are preserved in the Word. The same is to be said of the custom of the law, according to which the law is also to keep the flesh of Christians in check externally by terrors with hell and plagues.⁶⁰⁾ A mighty

56) Formula of Concord 644, 20 [[Trigl. 969, Sol. Decl., VI, 20](#) 963, ibid., 3 

57) Formula of Concord 642, 11 [[Trigl. 965, Sol. Decl., VII, 11](#) 



58) On Rom. 12:1. [St. L. XII, 318 f.](#) Walther, Pastorale, [p. 86](#) ff.

59) In themselves, they work — through the fault of — either grumbling and despair or arrogance and self-glory.

60) Formula of Concord 645, 24 [[Trigl. 969, F. C., Sol. Decl., VI, 24](#) quasi asinus indomitus et contumax), is also still a piece in them, which not only with the doctrine of the law, admonition, driving and threatening, but also often with the club of punishments and plagues to force into the obedience of Christ." This formulation corresponds to scriptural expressions such as 1 Cor. 9:27: *πωπιάζω* μου το σώμα καί δονλαγωγώ. The Formula of Concord in this connection (643, 19 [[Trigl. 969, Sol. Decl., VI, 19](#) coercive measures find their place.



example for this use of the law we have in Mark 9:42-48, where Christ exhorts to the most ruthless self discipline (cut off hand and foot, pluck out eye) by pointing out three times with the same words to the eternity of the punishments of hell.

7. The necessity (*necessitas*) of sanctification and good works. [^]

The necessity of sanctification and good works has caused much discussion. Partly there were word disputes because the words "necessary" and "free" are ambiguous. This is also indicated by the Formula of Concord (625, 4 [[Trigl. 939, Sol. Decl., IV, 4](#) ]): "Such a dispute arose at first over the words *necessitas* and *libertas*, that is, 'necessary' and 'free,' because especially the word *necessitas*, necessary, means not only the eternal, unchanging order according to which all men owe and are obliged to obey God, but also at times a compulsion, so that the law urges people to good works." However, it was not uncommon for differences of opinion to arise during the discussion. The Formula of Concord (625, 5 [[Trigl. 939, *ibid.*, 5](#) ]) also draws attention to this: "Afterwards, not only were the words disputed, but [also] the doctrine itself was most vehemently contested and disputed, that the new obedience in the born-again was not necessary because of the order above." To the errors and careless ways of speaking that had become vocal with regard to this point also within the Lutheran church,⁶¹⁾ is the opposition of the fourth article

61) Leipzig Interim (Melanchthon, etc.): "Now as this true knowledge" (of God and Christ) "must shine in us, so it is certainly true that these virtues: Faith, love, and hope, and others, must be in us and be necessary to salvation." ([Gieseler III, 1, p. 364.](#)) — George Major: "But this I confess, that I have taught before and still teach, and will teach all my life, that 'good works' are necessary for salvation, and I say publicly and with clear and distinct words, that no one will be saved by evil works, and that no one will be saved without 'good works', and I say more, that whoever teaches otherwise, even an angel from heaven, is accursed." (To the venerable Niklas v. Amsdorf's writing, G. Major's reply. Wittenb. 1552, e. I. In [Gieseler III, 2., p. 213 f.](#)) The same says a year later, 1553 (in the Sermon of St. Paul's Conversion, Preface), that good works are necessary, not to attain salvation, but "to keep it and not to lose it again". ([Gieseler III, 2, p. 214.](#)) Likewise, since 1554, Justus Menius ([Salig III, 46; Frank II, 223](#)). Cf. on the Majorist disputes [Salig I, 628 ff. 637 ff.](#); Schlüsselburg, *Catalogus*, vol. VII; Walch, *Streitgk. innerhalb etc. I*, 98 ff; Arnold I, 939 ff; Walch,

of the Formula of Concord. The doctrine of Scripture can be summarized thus:

First, sanctification and good works are not necessary for salvation. This is Scriptural teaching, because Scripture grants to faith from the first moment of its existence not only the forgiveness of sins, but also salvation without works of the law, that is, quite apart from sanctification and good works. The Scriptural evidence of the Formula of Concord is quite sufficient. It refers (531, 7 [[Trigl. 799, Epit. IV, 7](#) ]) to the scriptural passages Rom. 4:6; Eph. 2:8: "We believe, teach, and confess that good works, both when salvation is in question, and in the article of justification before God, are to be wholly excluded, as the apostle testifies in clear words, when he thus wrote: 'According to which also David saith, that salvation is of man only, to whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they to whom their unrighteousness is not imputed. And again, 'By grace are ye saved; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast,' Eph. 2." Scriptural doctrine is what Luther expresses thus, "Where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation." The improved Majorism, according to which good works are not necessary to obtain salvation, but are necessary to preserve it,⁶²⁾ is also contrary to Scripture. It is also refuted by the statements of Scripture, in which the possession of salvation is attributed to faith from the very beginning. If it were assumed that works take care of the preservation of salvation, then, as the Formula of Concord reminds us, the strange situation would arise "that faith alone takes hold of righteousness and salvation in the beginning, and afterwards hands over its office to works, so that the latter must in turn preserve faith, the righteousness and salvation it has received". (631, 34. [[Trigl. 949, Sol. Decl., IV, 34](#) ])

This would result in a dismissal of faith as the means of attaining blessedness. In contrast, the Formula of Concord points out that according to Scripture not only the beginning, but also the continuance of the

Bibliotheca Theol. II, 617 sqq.; Frank, [Theol. der F. C. II, 216 ff.](#); Thomasius, [Bekenntnis etc., p. 99 ff.](#), reprinted almost verbatim in Thomasius, [Dogmengesch.² II, 472 ff.](#); Seeberg, [Dogmengesch. II, 352 ff.](#); K. Thieme sub *Gute Werke* in RE. 3 XXI, 110 ff, especially 120 ff.

62) Note 61.

state of grace is imparted by faith alone: "Paul gives to faith not only the entrance into grace, but also that we stand in grace and boast of the glory to come, that is, the beginning, the means and the end he gives to faith alone. Again Rom. 11: 'They are broken because of their unbelief, but you stand by faith'; Col. 1:22: 'He will present you holy and blameless before Himself, if you continue otherwise in faith'; 1 Pet. 1: 5, 9: 'We are saved by the power of God through faith unto salvation'; Again: 'You will bring away the end of your faith, even the salvation of souls.'" In short, it directly contradicts Scripture when Major, Menius, and others addressed the necessity of good works, either to obtain or to preserve salvation.

But, when Major and his followers spoke of the necessity of good works, whether for the attainment or preservation of blessedness, they actually meant that good works were necessary for the preservation of faith. And this leads us to the real evil source of Majorism. It is semi-pelagianism or synergism.⁶³⁾ For if the synergistic assertion is true that conversion or the origin of faith is dependent on right human conduct or on the cessation of evil conduct, it is only consistent to make the preservation of faith also dependent on human good works or the cessation of evil works. It has been rightly pointed out, both in ancient and modern times, that George Major was by no means the inventor of the way of speaking that gave rise to the so-called Majorist controversy, namely, the way of speaking that good works are necessary for salvation. The later Melanchthon, under the influence of his synergism, had already established and defended the proposition of the necessity of good works for salvation in 1536 and earlier.⁶⁴⁾ Through Luther's energetic intervention

63) This was rightly pointed out by Major's opponents. ([Salig, I, 640.](#))

64) Frank refers ([2, 151](#)) to Melanchthon's *Loci* of 1535. One reads after Disputatio Philippi Melanchthon with Dr. Martin Luther, held alone over the article of justification, Anno 1536. (Erl. A. 58, 339 ff.) Philippus: Is this passage true: The righteousness of works is necessary for salvation? Latin (p. 353): *Philip: Utrum haec praepositio sit vera: Iustitia operum est necessaria ad salutem?*

Melanchthon was moved to drop his sentence.⁶⁵⁾ That Melanchthon was not cured of his error is evident not only from later statements and writings, but also from the fact that in the Leipzig Interim the words are found: "that these virtues: Faith, love and hope and others, must be in us and be necessary for salvation."⁶⁶⁾ The synergistic character of Majorism is still particularly evident in a conclusion that characterizes synergism to this day. This is the conclusion: if it must be admitted that man can hinder and destroy God's work by doing evil, it must also be admitted that man can promote the origin and preservation of faith by cessation of evil or by doing good works. Thus we see that in our time, for example, Luthardt thinks that by calling on Matt. 23:37: "Ye have not willed" to have led a scriptural proof for the cooperation of man in conversion.⁶⁷⁾ That in Major's thoughts the same paralogism caused the confusion is evident precisely from the statement in which he stoops to cursing all those who do not want to accept his proposition of the necessity of good works for salvation. He justifies his proposition with the fact that "no one will be saved by evil works". Major thus had in mind the thought connection: Just as evil works cause the loss of salvation, because of faith, so, in order for the mathematical example to be correct, it must also be said that good works are necessary for the preservation of faith and thus of salvation. In this false conclusion, too, Melanchthon had already gone ahead in the edition of the *Loci* of 1543. Frank: "Among the causes, namely, for the sake of which good works are to be done, the *necessitas retinendae fidei* is mentioned here, *quia Spiritus Sanctus expellitur et perturbatur, cum admittuntur peccata contra conscientiam* [[Google](#)]." ⁶⁸⁾ Therefore, it is necessary to clearly recognize the relationship between evil works, on the one hand,

65) Cf. Thomasius, *Das Bekenntnis der ev.-luth. K. etc.*, p. 100. [?]

66) Note 61. 67) *Dogmatik*, p. 284.

68) *Theol. F. C. II, 151. Corp. Ref. XXI, 775*. Menius also puts the two sentences: 1. that "new obedience to God ... is also necessary for salvation". 2. is also necessary for salvation", 2. "if one sins against conscience after having obtained forgiveness, that one thereby loses life and salvation" as equally true side by side. (Response of Justi Menii to M. Flacii Illyrians poisonous slander. Wittemb. 1557, fol. No. 4; in Thomasius, *Bekenntnis usw.*, S. 103 f.)

and good works, on the other, to the Christian's state of faith. The teaching of Scripture can be briefly summarized as follows: "Evil works destroy faith, but good works do not preserve faith."

First of all, the Scriptures teach very clearly and firmly that evil works destroy faith. The Scripture says of the people who by evil works cast away the good conscience, that they were shipwrecked in the faith, *περί την πίστιν ἐνανάγησαν*.⁶⁹⁾ The Formula of Concord refers to the whole class of Scripture statements which read thus, "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of boys, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor blasphemers, nor robbers, shall inherit the kingdom of God."⁷⁰⁾ The Lutheran Confession testifies to the same thing.⁷¹⁾ The Holy Scriptures also reveal to us the reason for the fact that evil works destroy faith. Not man, but the Holy Spirit is the *causa efficiens* of faith in the human heart. Now because through evil works the Holy Spirit is grieved and finally departs from the heart, evil works destroy faith. Hence the admonition Eph. 4:30: "Do not grieve (μη λυπεῖτε) the Holy Spirit of God, that you may be sealed to the day of redemption." The Holy Spirit, who entered the human heart with faith, is, as a Spirit of faith,⁷²⁾ so also a Spirit of sanctification and good works.⁷³⁾ He admonishes and inwardly drives unceasingly to the avoidance of evil and to the doing of good.⁷⁴⁾ If the Holy Spirit is persistently hindered in this part of His

69) 1 Tim. 1:18-20; 2 Tim. 2:16-18.

70) Formula of Concord 630, 32 [[Trigl. 947, F. C., Sol. Decl., IV, 32](#)]; 1 Cor. 6:9 ff; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:6.


71) Formula of Concord 630, 31 [[Trigl. 947, F. C., Sol. Decl., IV, 31](#)]; "This false Epicurean delusion is to be seriously rebuke and rejected, that some think that faith and the received righteousness and salvation cannot be lost by any, even willful and deliberate sin or evil works."

72) 2 Cor. 4:13: το πνεῦμα της πίστεως. Meyer on this passage: "The πίστις which the Spirit works was with David's confidence in God, with Paul faith in salvation in Christ." Correct with respect to Paul and all Christians. But David's "trust in God" was also faith in salvation in Christ, as David himself explicitly says [2 Sam. 23:1](#).

73) Gal. 5:22: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, chastity."

74) Of course, even with true Christians, because of the flesh clinging to them, the sanctifying work of the

Holy Spirit is not without continual hindrance. Therefore, it must be held with all seriousness and taught incessantly in the church that evil works destroy the faith.

But on the other hand, it cannot be said that good works keep faith in the human heart. Admittedly, good works, because they are an activity of faith worked by the Holy Spirit, are for Christians a mark of their faith and state of grace (*testimonium externum Spiritus Sancti de fide et statu gratiae*). For this reason, too, Christians should show all diligence in good works.⁷⁵⁾ But the proposition that good works preserve faith and thus salvation turns upside down everything that Scripture says about the relationship of faith to good works. Good works do not sustain faith, but vice versa: faith sustains good works, since, according to Scripture, good works are in every case only the effect, fruit and consequence of faith in the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake.⁷⁶⁾ One must wonder that within the Lutheran Church the proposition of the preservation of faith by good works or by the cessation of evil works could be seriously asserted and defended. Major and his comrades were therefore rightly reminded of the self-contradiction in which they moved, when on the one hand they claimed to hold that good works were only fruits and effects of faith, yet on the other hand they advocated the proposition that faith is preserved by good works. The Majoristic proposition is as senseless as if someone wanted to claim that the fruits bear the tree instead of the other way around. Majorism acquires a reasonable sense only when one does not let good works be merely the fruit and consequence of faith, but puts good works before faith. It belongs to the semi-Pelagian-synergistic and thus to the Roman camp, to which the Formula of Concord also expressly refers it (631, 35 [[Trigl 949, Sol. Decl., IV, 35](#) ]):

Holy Spirit. That they do not lose faith over this is because they stand in "daily repentance" (*poenitentia continuata, quotidiana*). They bear sorrow for their *peccata commissionis* and *omissionis* (Paul, Rom. 7:24), take hold of the forgiveness of sins in faith, and through the forgiveness of sins retain dominion over the affairs of the flesh, Rom. 6:14: "Sin shall not be able to have dominion over you, because ye are not under the law, but under grace."

75) 2 Pet. 1:10. Formula of Concord 630, 33. [[Trigl 947, F. C., Sol. Decl., IV, 33](#) ]

76) Cf. the detailed exposition p. 6 ff.

"Let what was concluded in the Trent Concilio, and what else has been directed more to the same opinion, that our good works preserve blessedness, or that the received righteousness of faith, or even faith itself, is preserved and preserved by our works, either wholly, or yea, in part, be rejected." The Roman character of Majorism should be frankly admitted. Any defense of it runs counter to both logic and the Scriptural doctrine of justification. Recent theologians have attempted to excuse Major with the good intention of "asserting the necessity of faith-originating renewal and good works."⁷⁷⁾ But between "the necessity of faith-originating renewal and good works" and the assertion that works sustain faith, there is not the slightest logical connection. On the contrary, as certainly as regeneration and good works are only fruits of faith, they do not preserve faith, but works are preserved by faith, as has already been pointed out. — Next, consider the situation that arises with respect to the actual attainment of salvation from Majorism. If good works preserve faith and thus salvation, the situation stands in such a way that faith is no longer the only means of attaining salvation, but good works, as the means of attaining salvation, stand beside faith, indeed in place of faith. Man then no longer attains salvation by faith *minus* works, but by faith *plus* works. But this is exactly the Roman doctrine of *fides caritate formata*. Luthardt⁷⁸⁾ also correctly says of Major's doctrine, "Thus the continuance of fellowship with God is traced to faith and new obedience at the same time." Even Thomasius finally acknowledges this when he says of Major's and Menius' propositions, "The salvation of man still has two factors: the work of God's grace through Christ for us and the work of the Spirit in us; trust in the latter and obedience to the latter. In the course of the Christian life, faith does not completely give up its principle

77) Thomasius, Das Bekenntnis der ev.-luth. K. in der Konsequenz seines Prinzips, p. 105 f.; Seeberg, Dogmengesch. II, 352.

78) Dogmatik, p. 321.

meaning to sanctification, but it shares it with it and thereby loses it.”

79) — It has also been argued in favor of Majorism that he does not want the good works which he calls necessary for salvation to be regarded as merit. So already Major himself.⁸⁰⁾ This objection makes a special impression on newer theologians. And yet we have here only the same self-deception and deception which we already encountered in the doctrines of conversion and justification. Even the *facultas se applicandi ad gratiam*, the right conduct, the refrain from willful refrain, etc., should not imply any merit with respect to the coming about of conversion, but the aforementioned must be there as something on which — besides the grace of God — conversion also depends (*conditio sine qua non*). Likewise, in justification, works should not be present as merit, but only as something without which justification does not come about.⁸¹⁾ We already proved earlier that here there is only a playing with words.⁸²⁾ One ascribes to what one does not want to call "merit" nevertheless the effect of merit, namely, "that through this very little we obtain righteousness and grace."⁸³⁾ So it stands with respect to Major's saying that good works, though not as merit, are nevertheless necessary to salvation. In this address, the one who asks about his salvation will turn his eyes away from the gospel, which promises salvation for Christ's sake "without law" and "without works of the law,"

79) [Das Bekenntnis usw., p. 108.](#)

80) Answer to the Venerable Niklas von Amsdorf's doctrine: "That although we teach that works are necessary for the salvation of souls, yet such good works cannot work or merit that sin be forgiven us, righteousness imputed to us, the Holy Spirit and eternal life given to us; for such glorious heavenly goods find us acquired through the death of our one Mediator and Savior Jesus Christ alone, and must be received through faith alone. Nevertheless, there must also be good works, not as merit, but as guilty obedience to God." (In [Gieseler III, 2, 214.](#)) In this sense the Wittenberg students also advocated Major. ([Salig I, 646.](#)) — Major especially urges the "not as merit" in *Testamentum Doctoris Georgii Maioris* 1570, B 2; in [Schmid-Hauck, p. 377.](#)

81) *Praesentia bonorum operum ad iustificationem necessaria est.* [[Google](#)]

82) With respect to conversion [II, p. 579 f.](#); with respect to justification, p. 645 f.

83) Luther, [II, p. 580.](#)

and will look for the works that are supposedly necessary for salvation, thus actually basing the attainment of salvation on works and thus transferring it to the area of the law. Therefore, the Formula of Concord still points out this deception very emphatically. Among the doctrines that "should not be taught, defended, or glossed over (*pingendae*) in the church" [[Trigl. 947, 29](#) [🔗](#)], it also includes the doctrine: "One should not place faith in the merit of works, but one should nevertheless have them as necessary things for salvation" and: "Although we require works as necessary for salvation, we do not teach to place trust in works." [[Trigl. 945, Sol. Decl., IV, 27](#) ff. [🔗](#)]

In short, one cannot but refer the Majoristic propositions, according to their content, to the Roman camp. And as their content is Roman, so also their effect with respect to the certainty of justification and salvation. For if good works are necessary for the preservation of faith and salvation, then, as the Formula of Concord reminds us (629, 23 [[Trigl. 945, 23](#) [🔗](#)]), the comfort of the gospel, which promises grace and salvation without works, is taken away from "the tempted, afflicted consciences," while among the sure ones "the presumption of one's own righteousness and the confidence in one's own works" are strengthened.⁸⁴⁾

Majorism thought and thinks to find cover behind Hebr. 12:14: "Without sanctification no one will see the Lord". With regard to this passage, two things have to be said: 1. The sanctification that is called for here presupposes faith, which already possesses salvation (Eph. 2:8; Joh. 5:24). Christians sanctify themselves insofar as they already have heaven in faith, Col. 3:1 ff; 2 Cor. 7:1. Insofar as we have our treasure in heaven, we let go of the dung of this earth. 2 The words of this passage are a warning against carnal security, as is evident from the context. They therefore belong to the law. Now, of course, the law must still be told to Christians, namely in so far as they are still inclined to carnal security and

84) The ministries of Lübeck, Hamburg, Brunswick and Magdeburg say in Schlüsselburg VII, 598 sq.: *Necessitas operum requisita ad salutem conditionem addit doctrinae fidei, salutem incertam, facit et inducit conscientias in dubitationem. Si bona opera necessaria sunt ad salutem, incerta est promissio, dubia salus, conscientiae necesse habent haesitare et angi de salute. Semper disputabunt et quaerent, quot, quanta et qualia opera sint necessaria, et an habeant opera, quae necessaria sint ad salutem.* [[Google](#)]

forget about sanctification. In this sense, that is, in the sense of warning against carnal security, there stands also the statement, "Without sanctification, no man shall see the Lord." For the words immediately follow, "Take heed (επισκοπούντες) lest any man neglect the grace of God, lest a bitter root grow up and cause mischief, and many be defiled by it; lest any man be a fornicator, or an ungodly man, like Esau, who for the sake of a meat sold his firstborn." In short, it is obvious that these words belong to the sermon of the law, and it is therefore also obvious that these words are not to be quoted in answer to the question by which the sinner condemned to hell by the law takes hold of and keeps the grace and salvation acquired by Christ and offered in the gospel. As is well known, this happens through faith in the gospel without works of the law, thus also without the works described in Hebr. 12:14-16. As Luther reminds us again and again, we must completely forget the law and everything it demands of us when it comes to obtaining God's grace and salvation. Therefore, also with regard to Hebr. 12:14-16, it must be said that the passage, like all other passages that demand good works, belong to the law (*sunt phrases legales*), are directed against carnal certainty (*contra fucatam fidem*) and are to be kept out of the article of justification and attainment of salvation. — Following the passage in Hebrews, we should also note a defense of Majorism, which also involves a blending of law and gospel. Both Major and Menius claimed that even if the proposition of the necessity of good works for salvation is not true in the area of justification, it has its justification in the area of the obedientia of the new man.⁸⁵⁾


85) Major in "Confession of the Article of Justification," B. 2: "The good works commanded by God and the new obedience are necessary to the believers for salvation, not to earn it, which they already have by grace through faith alone, but as an effect of true faith. (In Thomasius, *Bekenntnis usw.*, p. 102.) Menius in "On the Preparation for the Blessed Dying": "Even if in the believer righteousness and life, which beginning in this life ... is still quite weak and imperfect, it is nevertheless necessary for salvation and will be perfected in the future after the resurrection." (In *Salig III*, 55.)

On the other hand, it must be said that good works are not necessary for salvation even in the area of the new obedience. Works are not necessary for salvation. The new obedience is the fulfillment of the law.⁸⁶⁾ And as certainly as the attainment of salvation is not dependent on the fulfillment of the law, so certainly is the new obedience not necessary for salvation.

In contrast to Major's assertion that good works are necessary for salvation, Nikolaus von Amsdorf stated that good works are harmful for salvation.⁸⁷⁾ With regard to Amsdorf's way of speaking, the Formula of Concord first indicates that it was originally well-meant, namely, that reliance on good works was harmful to the attainment of grace and salvation. Here the Formula of Concord repeats very emphatically: "If any man would draw good works into the article of justification, and set his righteousness or confidence of salvation thereon, and thereby merit the grace of God, and thereby be saved: whereupon we do not say, but Paul himself says, and repeats it the third time Phil. 3, that to such a man his works are not only useless and hindering, but also harmful." After this explanation, however, the Confession also turns quite decisively against Amsdorf's way of speaking. From the fact that reliance on good works is harmful, it does not follow at all "that one should say *simpliciter* and thus merely (*nude*): Good works are harmful to the believer for and in salvation. Good works are not harmful, but are to be done with all diligence: 1. because they are a "display" of salvation to Christians, according to Phil. 1:28; 2. because they have "God's will and express command"; 3. because God promises to good works a "glorious reward in this life and in the life to come". For this reason, the talk about the harmfulness of good works for salvation is to be avoided as contrary to Scripture and annoying, because it weakens discipline and respectability.⁸⁸⁾ — With respect to Major, it should be added that he later (1558) declared that he did not want to "give anyone cause for further quarreling, with the refrain of these words: The words 'good works are necessary for salvation' are not to be used any longer

86) Rom. 13:8-10.

87) "That the *proposition*: Good works are harmful to salvation, is a right true Christian proposition, taught and preached by the saints Paul and Luther. Niklas von Amsdorf 1559." (*Salig I*, 642.)

88) Formula of Concord 632, 37-40. [*Trigl.* 949, 37-40 

because of the false interpretation, as I have been abstaining from them for many years." ⁸⁹⁾ From these words it is clear that Major was also later unclear about the actual nature of his sentence. The sentence that good works are necessary for salvation is not merely "because of the wrong interpretation", but is wrong in itself; it does not allow for any correct interpretation. The Formula of Concord is therefore right to reject the phrase absolutely, whether one thinks of the attainment or the preservation of salvation, or of faith. There is only one cure for the Majoristic phrase: the words "to salvation" must be deleted from it. After this deletion, it reads, "Good works are necessary." With this deletion, however, the Majorism that has caused so much distress to the Church is abandoned.

The phrase: "Sanctification and good works are necessary" is correct. It should not be criticized. It is already above criticism from the outset because it is a way of speaking from Holy Scriptures. Scripture calls our obedience to authority a "necessity" (ἀνάγκη) ⁹⁰⁾ and the fact that we obey God more than men a must (δεῖ). ⁹¹⁾ If a phrase of Scripture has been misused by false teachers to cover their error—and this has also happened with the expressions "necessary," "must," etc.—the misuse must be exposed and rejected. The manner of speaking itself, however, is not to be objected to, but to be held fast. The contrary procedure would involve a criticism of the Holy Spirit, as if he had not known how to speak unmistakably. If we ask more closely in what sense we should address the necessity of sanctification and good works, Scripture instructs us that sanctification and good works are necessary because God wants them (*necessitate voluntatis et praecepti sive mandati divini*). It is 1 Thess. 4:3: τοντό εστι τό θέλημα τον_θεον ο αγιασμός νμών; 1 John 3:23: αντη έσύν ή εντολή αντον, ἵνα ... άγαπώμεν άλληλονς, καβώς Ρδωκεν εντολήν ήμιν. And indeed God wills or commands sanctification and good works in several respects. He wills them a. for his own sake. The justified


89) "Bekenntnis von dem Artikel der Justifikation," B. 3. (In [Schmid-Hauck, p. 377.](#))

90) Rom. 13:5.

91) Acts 5:29.

are not to serve sin and the devil, but God, their rightful Lord, who created them and then bought them dear through the blood of His Son. Sanctification and good works are also a purpose of redemption.⁹²⁾ b. For the sake of Christians. Christians are to have in their sanctification and in their good works an outward sign (*testimonium Spiritus Sancti externum*) of their state of grace and salvation.⁹³⁾ c. For the sake of the world. The world should have an external witness to the truth of the gospel in the works and conduct of Christians, and thus be induced to hear the saving word.⁹⁴⁾ — This necessity, however, is not a compulsion (*necessitas coactionis*), but a willingness, because Christians, inasmuch as they are renewed, or after the new man, gladly and with pleasure do the will of God, Rom. 7:22: συνήδουμαι τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἐσω ἄνθρωπον. They are therefore. When the necessity of sanctification and good works is addressed, God's will, command, and precept, on the one hand, and the willingness or voluntariness on the part of Christians, on the other, are not to be opposed to each other, but are to be bound together, because the law, that is, God's will, command, and precept, is written on the heart of the Christian through the gospel (Jer. 31:31 ff.).⁹⁵⁾ This is to be noted against antinomianism.

92) Tit. 2:12-14: "Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem (ἀντρώπηται, ransom) us from all unrighteousness, and purify unto himself a people for a possession, to be diligent to good works (ζηλωτὴν καλῶν ἔργων)." Eph. 2:10: "We are his workmanship (ποίημα), created in Jesus Christ Jesus unto good works." Luther (St. L. XVI, 2241 f.): "Christ is therefore Christ or has acquired redemption from sins and death, that the Holy Spirit should make us new men from the old Adam, that we may be dead to sins and alive to righteousness, as St. Paul teaches Rom. 6, beginning and increasing here on earth and accomplishing it there. For Christ has merited for us not only *gratiam*, grace, but also *donum*, the gift of the Holy Spirit, that we might have not only remission of sins, but also cessation of sins."

93) 1 John 3:14: "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren." (Apol. 135, 154 f. [Trigl. 199, 154 f. Luther on Matt. 6:14. 15; St. L. VII, 512 ff. Cf. the section on "Justification by Works," II, p. 654 ff.)

94) 1 Pet. 2:12 ("Lead a good walk among the heathen" etc.): 3:1. 2 (those who do not believe in the word shall be won by the women's walk without word); Matt. 5:13-16 (salt of the earth, light of the world).


95) Therefore, one has also addressed an "inner necessity" or "natural necessity" in contrast to compulsion, as a good tree brings forth fruit according to its

which did not want to suffer the expressions "necessary," "needful," "ought," and "must" in the Church, because it incomprehensibly assumed that these expressions always meant only compulsion.⁹⁶⁾ — Likewise, the expressions "willingness," "free," etc., are to be left uncriticized. Scripture uses these expressions to denote the right kind of good works in contrast to the compulsion of the law.⁹⁷⁾ If it was claimed that by these expressions the good works were transferred to the realm of adiaphora, this was also a misunderstanding and misuse of the scriptural words.⁹⁸⁾

good nature and the sun shines according to its created nature. So also Luther, Erl. A. 58, 350 f. Willfulness belongs to the essence of a good work. Insofar as inner unwillingness is bound up with the works, they are not good but evil works. Quenstedt says rightly (II, 1374): *A bono opere abesse debet omnis coactio; non modo enim indignus est laude, sed ne quidem dignus est venia, qui invitus officium facit. Damnat enim ipse actionem suam, aliter facturus, si daretur optio.* [Google] Therefore, Christians need forgiveness of sins even for their good works, because unwillingness is still attached to these works due to the reluctant flesh of Christians. Roman ignorance condemned Luther's sentences such as these, "A pious man sins in all his good works." (Cf. Luther, St. L. XV, 1551 ff.).

96) Melanchthon reports in his report to the Senate of Nordhausen (Corp. Ref. VIII, 411): "Some do not want to tolerate this address: Good works are necessary, or thus: one must do good works; do not want to have these two words, *necessitas* and *debitum*, and the court preacher [Agricola] stood at the same time and played with the word must: the must is salted; understood *necessarium* and *debitum* [duty] for forced by fear of punishment, extortum coactione, [extorted by coercion] and spoke high words', how good works would come without law" (which is admittedly also true of the Christian according to the new man). "So, however, *necessarium* and *debitum* are not first called *extortum coactione*, but the eternal and immutable order of divine wisdom, and the Lord Christ and Paul themselves need this word' *necessarium* and *debitum*." (See Trigl., Hist. Introd., p. 123 f.) It is not correct when Melanchthon says of the proposition: "Good works are necessary for salvation": "this disputation arose from many previous mischievous statements of twenty years ago." Melanchthon himself had raised that "proposition" twenty years ago, and the cause of it was his synergistic impulses.

97) Ps. 110:3: חֶבְרֵן עָפָר [HEBREW]; Cor. 9:7: "Each according to his own will (καθὼς προσηρῆται τῇ καρδίᾳ), not from unwillingness or compulsion" (ἐξ ἀνάγκης); 1 Pet. 5:2: μη ἀναγκαστικῶς, ἀλλὰ ἐκονσίως. ["Not by constraint, but willingly"]

98) Formula of Concord 628, 20 [Trigl. 945, 20 thus free to the believers, that it stood in their free will that they do or leave such ... would like."

8. The imperfection of sanctification. [^]


While justification has no degrees, but, where it is, is always perfect,⁹⁹⁾ so with regard to sanctification there is a *minus* and *plus*. Hence the exhortations of Scripture to increase in all matters,¹⁰⁰⁾ in every good work,¹⁰¹⁾ in the work of the brethren,¹⁰²⁾ the knowledge of God, patience, longsuffering in loving the brethren and all men,¹⁰⁴⁾ in discerning good and evil,¹⁰⁵⁾ in walk and godliness, etc.¹⁰⁶⁾ According to this, there are degrees in sanctification and good works. And since the exhortation to increase in sanctification is accompanied by the exhortation to put away the old man, this means that sanctification and good works remain imperfect in this life even among the serious Christians.¹⁰⁷⁾ The question has been raised why God does not make the sanctification of Christians, like justification, perfect in a moment — by completely removing the evil nature. That God could do this according to his omnipotence, no one will doubt. But since God does not do it according to the revelation in His Word, the question raised belongs to the *quaestiones otiosae et inutiles*.¹⁰⁸⁾ The οάρξ remains in Christians throughout this earthly life,¹⁰⁹⁾ and therein it is justified that also their sanctification in this life remains an imperfect one. Paul indicates the actual condition by the words: τῷ μεννοῖ (that is, after the new man) δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ, τῇ δε σαρκί (that is, after the old man) νόμῳ αμαρτίας.¹¹⁰⁾ The dogmatists express it thus: *Iustitia fidei sive imputata perfecta sive consummata est, iustitia vitae sive haerens*

99) Cf. the section "Justification has no degrees" ([II, 646 ff.](#)).



100) Eph. 4:15. 101) 2 Cor. 9:8. 102) 1 Cor. 15:58.

103) Col. 1:11. 104) 1 Thess. 3:12. 105) Phil. 1:10.

106) 1 Thess. 4:1.

107) F. C. 605, 68 [[Trigl. 907, Sol. Decl., II, 68](#) 

108) Carpzov, *Disputatt. isagog.*, p. 1161; in Baier [III, 312](#). Luther [II, 778](#).

109) Rom. 7:14-24; Hebr. 12:1. In addition, F. C. 537, 4 [[Trigl. 805, Epit., VI, 4](#) Trigl. 965, Sol. Decl., I, 7 

110) Rom. 7:25. On this Luther [XV, 1552](#).

imperfecta, inchoata, non consummata. [[Google](#)]¹¹¹⁾ Perfectionism, that is, the doctrine of a perfect righteousness of life,¹¹²⁾ if really meant, completely excludes the Christian faith, because the Christian faith is the faith in the forgiveness of sins, that is, it presupposes the having of sins. Rome further enhances the falsity of perfectionism by asserting that there are human individuals who have a surplus of holiness and good works and can give of it to others.¹¹³⁾ Scripture describes perfectionism as





111) Baier [III, 312](#).

112) Thus Rome, Tridentinum, *sess. VI, can. 18, 20*; the Unitarians, such as Socinus in his *Disput. on Rom. 7*: p. 56, and in more recent times W. E. Channing, *Imitableness of Christ's Character* (The Works of W. E. Channing, p. 316); the Arminians, e.g. Limborch, *Theol. Christ V, 15, 2*; enthusiasts, such as Schwenkfeld and Weigel (cf. Quenstedt II, 921 sq.; Günther, *Symbolik 4, p. 256*); the Methodists, Ev. Fellowship, United Evangelical Church, the Inspired (citations in Günther, op. cit, [P. 255](#) ff.); Mahan and Finney of Oberlin (Hodge, *Syst. Theol. III, 255* ff.). Source material in Baumgarten, *Streitigk. II*, 462-482; in Günther I. c. On the doctrine of perfection among the Methodists: Schneckenburger, Kleine Protest. Kirchenparteien, pp. 136 ff. Everything said in favor of perfect holiness is already found with the Arminians, so also the conclusion from ought to be to being, whereas Baumgarten (II, 479) correctly says: "The general exhortation of God to diligence in sanctification proves the contrary, in that it is thereby presupposed that there is always still something to tidy up and mend, otherwise this duty would belong only to beginners, since it nevertheless remains an obligation of man until his perfected state." Compilation of the alleged reasons for perfect sanctification in Baumgarten (II, 468 ff. 478 ff.). — Perfectionism in all its varieties, from Rome on to Mahan and Finney, has this in it, that it slackens from the perfection of the demands of the divine law against Gal. 3:10, and thereby, where it is consistently followed, also dismisses faith in Christ. Strong (*Syst. Theol., 877*): "This view reduces the debt to the debtor's ability to pay, — a short and easy method of discharging obligations. I can leap over a church-steeple, if I am only permitted to make the church-steeple low enough." Rome and Wesley limit the term sin to that by which a man consciously and deliberately goes against God's commandments, and remove from the rubric of "sin" the inherent evil inclination and involuntary transgressions. Wesley: "I believe a person filled with love of God is still liable to involuntary transgressions. Such transgressions you call sins, if you please; *I do not*." (In Strong, [I. c., p. 878](#).) Likewise Rome, Trident, *Sessio V, Decretum de peccato originali 5*. (Smets, p. 18 f.).

113) These are the Roman *opera supererogationis*, which come about because certain people, e.g. the monks, are so pious that they not only

self-deception and lies: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."¹¹⁴) Cover is sought by perfectionism especially behind 1 John 3:9. But the words, "He that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth with him" describe the Christian according to the new man who, though struggling, asserts dominion over sin or the old man. The apostle distinguishes between "doing sin" (αμαρτίαν ποιεῖν), which he denies to the Christian 1 John 3:9, and "having sin" (αμαρτίαν εἶναι), which he grants to the Christian 1 John 1:8. The former describes a sinning whereby sin gains dominion and does as it pleases; the latter describes a sinning whereby the Christian, through the new man, because his seed abides with him, asserts dominion over sin. A factual parallel is Rom. 6:14: "Sin shall not be able to have dominion over you, because ye are not under law, but under grace."

The truth of the imperfection of sanctification in this life is not to be misused for sloth in sanctification and good works. God's will and the Christian attitude corresponding to it is rather that the Christian strives not only for partial, but complete sanctification¹¹⁵) and pursues not only some, but all good works.¹¹⁶)

do what is commanded in God's law, but also do what is merely recommended (*consilia evangelica*, namely the three great monastic virtues): Poverty, obedience and celibacy). Thus Bellarmin (*lib. 2, De Monach*, c. 7. 8). Gerhard aptly characterizes the *opera supererogationis* by a play on words: *recte quidem opera illa dicuntur supererogationis, quia ingens pecuniae summa illis erogata est, quia opera illa aliis vendiderunt; rectius autem dicerentur opera superarrogationis, quod sit evidens arrogantia, sibi tale quippiam tribuere ac polliceri*. [Google] Bellarmin's and Thomas' definition of *consilia evangelica* in Gerhard, l. c. Against the *opera supererogationis* as *opera superarrogantiae*: Augsb. Conf. 62, 62 [Trigl. 93, XXVIII, 62 ]; Apol. 147, 239 [Trigl. 219, III, 239 ]; 169, 14 [257, XII, 14 ]; 193, 45-47 [295, VI, 45-47 ].

114) 1 John 1:8, 10; Prov. 20:9; Job 14:4; Eccl. 7:21; Rom. 7:18-24; Matt. 6:12.

115) 2 Cor. 7:1: "Therefore, since we have such promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness (ἀπό παντός μολνσμον) of the flesh and spirit"; Col. 2:1: "Put away therefore all malice and all deceit (πάσαν κακίαν και πάντα δόλον)"; 1 Pet. 1:15: ἅγιοι ἐν πάσῃ ἀναστροφῇ.

116) Col. 1:10: "Walk worthily of the Lord to all pleasing (εἰς πασαν ἀρεσκείαν) and be fruitful in all good works (ἐν παντὶ ἐργῷ ἀγα&φ)"; Phil. 4:8: δσα (all things) ἐστὶν ἀλητόῃ, δσα σεμνά, δσα δίκαια, δσα ἀγνά, δσα προσφιλῇ, δσα εὐφημα, εἰ τις ἀρετὴ και εἴ τις ἐπαινος (if there is

The striving to avoid all sin and to serve God in all good works belongs to the right form of the Christian life and corresponds to the attitude of the Christian according to the new man.¹¹⁷⁾ When Scripture calls Christians "perfect ones," τέλειοι, even with respect to their lives,¹¹⁸⁾ it describes perfection as consisting in the striving for perfection,¹¹⁹⁾ Where the striving to serve only God is forgotten, the Christian state is in extreme danger: "You cannot serve God and mammon";¹²⁰⁾ "Whoever does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple."¹²¹⁾ Hence the exhortations to unsparing self-denial: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."¹²²⁾ This is the meaning of the narrow gate (στενή πύλη) and the narrow way (τεϋλιμμένη ὁδός) that led to life,¹²³⁾ as well as the cutting off of hands and feet and the plucking out of eyes, of which Christ speaks.¹²⁴⁾ The apostle Paul also does not draw any other figure of the Christian life. He says, "Every one that fighteth abstaineth from all things, πάντα εγκρατενεται,¹²⁵⁾ nor did the apostle himself consider himself dispensed from it, but confesseth, "I stupefy (νπωπιάζω) my body, and tame (ὀνλαγωγώ) it, lest I preach unto others, and become reprobate myself."¹²⁶⁾ Of course, this begs the question: who then can be saved?¹²⁷⁾ Christ answers: "With men it is

any virtue and if there is any praise), *παντα λογίζεσθε*. Meyer on this passage: "οσα, all which, nothing excepted, said asyndetically six times with great emphasis".

117) Rom. 7:22: "I delight (σννήδομαι) in God's law according to the inward man."

118) Phil. 3:15: οσοι ονν τέλειοι, τοντο φρονόμεν.

119) Phil. 3:14: τα μεν ὀπίσω ἐπιλανθανόμενος, τοῖς δέ ἐμπροσθὲν ἐπεκτεινόμενος, κατὰ σκοπόν διώκω. Cf. Luther on Matt. 5:48; VII, 489 ff. Quenstedt 11, 924.

120) Matt. 6:24.

121) Luke 14:25-35. The whole passage belongs here.

122) Matt. 16:24. 123) Matt. 7:13. 14.

124) Matt. 18:8. 9; Mark. 9:43-50. 125) 1 Cor. 9:25.

126) 1 Cor. 9:27. Το νπωπιάζω election: „Ab υπόπιον, ea pars faciei, quae est sub oculis, sugillo, ut sub oculis vibices et maculae luridae existant, I strike one in the face that he gets brown and blue spots under the eyes from it." The word in the New Testament only Luke 18:5. (Cf. Meyer on both passages, also Winer, Grammatik 6, p. 42.)

127) Luke 19:25.

impossible, but with God all things are possible."¹²⁸⁾ It is precisely in the right earnestness in sanctification that Christians face their daily deficit. They recognize and confess this to God and take refuge in safe territory, namely the territory of grace or forgiveness of sins. They can do this confidently because grace is free, completely detached from the law and from all human activity, and therefore not dependent on daily success or failure in sanctification and good works. Only when we distinguish in this way between the law and the gospel do we understand how the same apostle is completely sure of grace and salvation¹²⁹⁾ and at the same time speaks of the necessity of unsparing self-restraint, lest he preach to others and himself become reprobate.¹³⁰⁾ We come here to the fact that the whole Christian life is a daily repentance. The more sincerely Christians strive daily to renounce everything they have and to serve only God with their works, the more they recognize daily the deep sinful corruption that clings to them according to the flesh, and the more they are prompted to fall back daily on the free grace of God in Christ, which the gospel promises. And because they are not under the law, but under grace,¹³¹⁾ they daily begin anew the striving for perfect sanctification, in one respect sadly,¹³²⁾ but at the same time joyfully.¹³³⁾ Thus, in the pursuit of perfect sanctification, the Christian life becomes a daily penance (*poenitentia quotidiana, poenitentia stantium*).

Considerations have been made as to whether perfectionism or forgetfulness of sanctification is the greater evil. A. J. Gordon says: "If the doctrine of sinless perfection is a heresy, the doctrine of contentment with sinful imperfection is a greater heresy. ... It is not an edifying spectacle to see a Christian worldling throwing stones at a Christian perfectionist." ¹³⁴⁾ It is useless to try to weigh the relative greatness of the "heresies" under address. Scripture says to the "Christian

128) Luke 19:26.

129) Rom 8:37-39.

130) 1 Cor. 9:27.

131) Rom. 6:14.

132) Rom. 7:24: "I wretched man, who will deliver me from the body of this death?"

133) Rom. 7:25: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" Rom. 8:37-39.

134) *Ministry of the Spirit*, p. 116 [p. 120]; in Strong, *Syst. Theol.*, p. 881.

worldlings": "Know this, that no fornicator or unclean person or covetous person, who is an idolater, has inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with vain words! For because of these the wrath of God comes upon the children of unbelief. Therefore be not their companions (συμμέτοχοι αὐτῶν)!"¹³⁵ And to perfectionists the Scripture says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," and with aggravated expression, "If we say we have not sinned (ἡμαρτήκαμεν), we make Him [God] a liar, and His Word is not in us."¹³⁶ If perfectionists like Wesley remained in the faith, it was because they did not believe their doctrines for their person.

We add here what Luther says in "Grund und Ursach' aller Artikel, so durch die römische Bulle unrechtlich verdammen worden" ("Reason and Cause of All Articles Unlawfully Condemned by the Roman Bull") following Augustine: "A pious man sins in all good works" and: "A good work, done in the best way, is a daily sin according to mercy and a mortal sin according to the strict judgment of God."¹³⁷ The Council of Trent has especially cursed this statement of Luther,¹³⁸ because it takes away the foundation of the Roman doctrine of works and thus of the whole papacy. For even if Christians need forgiveness of sins for their good works because of their inherent imperfection, they cannot earn forgiveness of sins with their works. Luther's defense of his sentence refutes the Roman, as well as the "Protestant" perfectionism. Luther writes: "This article" ("A pious man sins in all good works") "exasperates the works saints, who build their comfort on their own righteousness and not on God's mercy, that is, on sand; therefore they will be like

135) Eph. 5:5-7.

136) 1 John 1:8, 10. Huther correctly remarks on the perfect tense ἡμαρτήκαμεν: "The perfect tense does not prove that ἡμαρτήκαμεν is meant by sinning before conversion; rather, it is here, as in all the verses before, that the Christians' sinning is addressed."

137) St. L. XV, 1551, 1554.

138) Sess. VI, can. 25: *Si quia in quolibet bono opere iustum saltem venialiter peccare dixerit, aut, quod intolerabilius est, mortaliter, atque ideo poenas aeternas mereri tantumque ob id non damnari, quia Deus opera non imputet ad damnationem, anathema sit.*

the house built on the sand, Matt. 7. But let a devout Christian man learn and know that all his good works are unprofitable and not enough in the sight of God, despairing with all the dear saints of his works, and considering the mere mercy of God with all confidence and firm trust; therefore let us well establish this article, and see what the dear saints have to say about it. Iesaias (chap. 64:6) thus says: "All our righteousnesses are found unclean, and all our righteousnesses are like stained, stinking cloths." Notice that the prophet does not exclude anyone, saying, "All of us are unclean," and yet he was a holy prophet. Again, if our righteousness is unclean and stinks before God, what will unrighteousness do? To this he says: 'all righteousness' excludes none. If then a good work is without sin, then this prophet is lying; God be before! Is this passage of Isaiah not clear enough? Why do they condemn my article, which says nothing else than this prophet? But we like to be condemned with the holy prophet. Item, Solomon (Eccl. 7, 21) : There is no one so pious on earth who does a good work and does not sin'. I think this passage is enough and expresses my article from word to word. Now, Solomon is damned here; let us see, his father David must also be damned, who says Ps. 143:2: 'Lord, do not enter into judgment with me your servant, for no living man is found justified before your face.' Who is God's servant but he who does good works? How is it then that he does not like to suffer God's judgment? God's judgment is not unjust. If the work were completely good without sin, it would not escape God's right judgment. So there must be a defect in the work, so that it is not pure. Therefore no living man is justified before God, but all are allowed to his mercy, even in their good works. Here you papists should prove your art, not only writing bulls, but answering to such passages. In the first two articles above, I have shown how all saints fight against their sinful flesh and are still sinners as long as they live in the flesh, which fights against the Spirit, so that they serve God according to the Spirit and sin according to the flesh. Therefore, if a godly man is both justified by the Spirit and sinful by the flesh, the work must certainly be like the person, the fruit like the tree. And as much as the Spirit has in the work, so

as much it is good, but as much as the flesh has in it, as much as it is evil. ... But whether they will say here, as they will say: Yes, such uncleanness is not sin, but an imperfection and infirmity or defect, I answer, Certainly it is a defect and infirmity; but if this be not called sin, I also will say that murder and adultery are not sin, but only a defect and infirmity. But who gave you papists power thus to tear up the Word of God, and to call such impurity of the good work infirmity, and not sin? Where is one letter of Scripture for you? Must we believe your bad dreams without Scripture, and you do not want to believe our clear Scriptures? ... As David says (Ps. 143:2) that even God's servants may not suffer His judgment, and no living man is justified before Him, this infirmity must surely be sin. ... Item, St. Augustine (*Confess.* 9): Woe to all human life, even though it be the most praiseworthy, where it is judged without mercy! Behold, the great heretic Augustine, as he speaks against this holy bull so impudently and sacrilegiously, that he not only ascribes sin to the good life, but also condemns the very best life (which is undoubtedly in good works), if they are not helped by the mercy of God, as if they were vain mortal sins. O! St. Augustine, do you not fear the Most Holy Father Pope? St. Gregory says of St. Job: "The holy man Job saw that all our good works are vain sins, if God judges them; therefore he says (Job 9:3): If anyone wants to be right with God, he cannot answer him one thing for a thousand. Who, you, Gregori? Should you be allowed to say that all our good works are vain sins? You are under the Pope's excommunication and a heretic, much worse than Luther, who only says that in all good works there are sins, and you make vain sin out of it. ... Further, the same Gregory says: "We have now said many times that all human righteousness is found unrighteous when it is severely judged; therefore Job says: "Even if I had done something righteous, I would not answer God to be right with him, but would plead with him as my judge. Now God's judgment is not false nor unjust, but true and justified. If then unrighteousness is found in our righteousness, that same unrighteousness must not be fictitious, but truly there, and not merely a defect or infirmity, but a damnable sin, which hinders salvation,

mercy does not occur and accepts and rewards the works out of pure grace. If these passages do not help my article, God help it. So I would rather be condemned with Isaiah, David, Solomon, Paul, Augustine, Gregory, than be praised with the Pope, all bishops and papists, if the world were like pope, papists and bishops. O blessed is he who should die over this cause! Amen."

9. Good works according to quality and quantity. ^

Under this section the following points are dealt with: 1. The right quality of works includes that they are done a. according to the norm of the divine law or will, d. from a willing spirit. 2. Examination of the good works of the heathen and the Christians according to the above qualities. 3. The quantity of good works according to God's will and the deficit in practice.

The standard of good works. ^

Because man is not autonomous, but according to his whole being and acting under God, it belongs to the right quality of his works that he also lets God alone tell him which works he should do.¹³⁹⁾ Neither his own will¹⁴⁰⁾ nor the will of other men¹⁴¹⁾ should determine his actions. Of all works that have human commandments as their standard, it is said, "In vain do they serve me, because they teach such doctrines as are nothing but commandments of men."¹⁴²⁾ Even good intention cannot replace the divine norm.¹⁴³⁾ The Scripture refers to the

139) Deut. 5:32: "Do as the Lord your God has commanded you, and do not turn aside to the right hand or to the left." Matt. 4:10: "You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him alone."

140) Col. 2:23: forbidden. [Luther 1, 866](#) f. Deut. 15:39: "that you do not judge according to your heart's conceit, nor fornicate according to your eyes." XXX [HEBREW] with אָחֲרָיָה [HEBREW]: to follow, to follow after. Good is Lucas Osiander on this passage. Of the time of the judges it is said reprovingly Judges 17:6; 21:25: "Every man did that which seemed right to him."

141) Ezek. 20:18: "Ye shall not live after your fathers' commandments." Col. 2:16: "Let no one therefore make conscience of you," μη οὖν τις ὑμᾶς κρινέτω ἐν βρώσει κτλ.

142) Matt. 15:9; Mark. 7:7.

143) 1 Sam. 15:22; Jn. 16:2; Acts 26:9. 26:9. [Brochmand](#) takes it for granted that the good intention does not make any work that goes against the divine norm good; but that the evil intention makes any work that is outwardly normed by God's command

setting aside of the divine norm as absolute apostasy from God and idolatry, because the situation is this: Whoever makes himself the norm of his works, thereby actually sets aside God as his Lord and master and makes himself his own god.¹⁴⁴⁾ And he who lets his actions be standardized by the commandments of other men, *eo ipso* puts these men in God's place. Also, according to the Scriptures, it includes a degradation of man if man becomes subject to man's commandments instead of God's commandments alone, because God created man to the honorable position that he should worship and serve God alone as his Lord.¹⁴⁵⁾ In the same way, man has been redeemed by the incarnate Son of God, so that he may again occupy the same honorable position, namely the position of a freeman to all the commandments of man.¹⁴⁶⁾ So powerfully does the Scripture inculcate throughout and in manifold ways that all the doings of man are to go along merely in God's will and command. To bring out this thought sharply, Luther argues *ab impossibili* thus: "If thou couldst make the whole world saved by one sermon, and hast not the command, let it alone; for thou shalt break the right Sabbath, and shall not please God."¹⁴⁷⁾ Even the suffering should only take place according to God's will¹⁴⁸⁾ and not be a self-chosen one. The dogmatists express it something like this: *Norma directrix, secundum quam bona opera praestanda et diiudicanda sunt, est verbum legis divinae, quod perfectissimam regulam iustitiae et sanctitatis divinae continet et tum facienda tum omittenda praescribit.* [[Google](#)]¹⁴⁹⁾

There is no objection to the fact that Scripture often and earnestly inculcates obedience to parents and worldly superiors. Of course, we should obey the commandments of our parents¹⁵⁰⁾ and of the

evil, as Matt. 6:1 ff. (*System, univers. th., art. 25, c. 3, cas. 9, p. 258; in Baier III, 322.*)

144) 1 Sam. 15:22. 23. Luther on Saul, who preferred to sacrifice rather than make God's commandment the norm of his actions ([St. L. I, 866](#)): "Scripture calls it very abominable sorcery, idolatry, and idol worship, if one does not hear God's Word or if one undertakes something without or against God's Word, which is truly said in an abominable manner, especially when one sees how common such things are in the world and are going on.

145) Matt. 4:10.

146) 1 Cor. 7:23: "You were bought dear (τιμής); do not become servants of men!"

147) [St. L. III, 1090](#). 148) 1 Pet. 3:17.

149) Quenstedt II, 1387. 150) Eph. 6:1 ff; Col. 3:20.

worldly superiors,¹⁵¹⁾ if they do not contradict God's commandments,¹⁵²⁾ be subject to them. But in doing so, we do not fall from God's commandments to man's commandments, because God has made the commandments of parents and worldly superiors His own commandments in those things that do not contradict His commandments. Thus, the rule remains intact that only God's will or God is the standard of good works. Yes, Scripture often and forcefully inculcates this as well: If human commandments want to impose themselves as the norm for our actions, it is part of sanctification and good works not to be subject to these commandments.¹⁵³⁾ Of course, here again the question arises, which was dealt with especially in the doctrine of sin and the law of God, how the will of God, which is the norm of all men's works until the Last Day, can be known with certainty. Briefly summarized, the answer is: The will of God is not known for sure from the natural conscience, because there is an erring conscience after the fall;¹⁵⁴⁾ also not from the law of Moses, because it contains separate regulations for the Jews,¹⁵⁵⁾ also not from special commandments, which only concerned individual persons, for example Abraham,¹⁵⁶⁾; also not from so-called commandments of the church, because the church cannot command anything beyond God's Word.¹⁵⁷⁾ The norm of good works is known for sure only from the Holy Scriptures. From the Scriptures we also recognize which commandments contained in the Scriptures had only temporary validity, and which bind all men at all times and in all places.¹⁵⁸⁾

Just as, on the one hand, it is to be noted that the commandments of men are to be rejected as the norm of good works, and the works done according to this norm are judged: "In vain do they serve me, because they teach such doctrines, which are nothing but the commandments of men,"¹⁵⁹⁾ so, on the other hand, it is to be taught with great diligence in the Christian church,

151) Rom. 13:1 ff; 1 Pet. 2:13-14. 152) Acts 5:29.

153) Acts 5:29; 1 Cor. 7:23; 1 Tim. 4:1 ff.; Matt. 10:37.

154) Jn. 16:2; Acts 26:9 ff.

155) Deut. 11; Deut. 15:32 ff, compare with Col. 2:16-17.

156) Gen. 22:1 ff. Luther [I, 1232 f.](#)


157) Matt. 23:8. Luther [I, 867](#): "The church is of no concern to us in this case; ... She is a disciple of Christ, and although she teaches, she teaches nothing except what she is commanded to teach by Christ."

158) Luther [III, 1083 ff.](#) 159) Matt. 15:9; Mark. 7:7.

that whatever Christians do according to God's will is good and great, whether it has any standing before men or not. No one and nothing is good in itself. Only God is good in Himself. "No one is good except the one God." ¹⁶⁰⁾ Everything created and what belongs to what is created is only good *dependenter a Deo*, that is, insofar as it corresponds to the will of God. The idea that something is good independently of God belongs to the realm of dualism, that is, atheism. As self-evident as this is, so often it is forgotten. It is forgotten in philosophy and philosophizing theology, which puts "the idea of good" apart from and above God. It is forgotten in theology in particular when it gives the predicate "good" to human works that do not have their norm in God's command and will. But this also includes the positive side, that everything that is actually done according to God's will and order is *eo ipso* ennobled, no matter whether it is highly praised by men or deeply despised. Here the dictum "In His Majesty's Service" comes to its proper and full meaning. To this the apostle reminds the Christian servants (δοῦλοι) in reference to the seemingly lowly works of their servanthood, when he writes: "Let it seem to you that ye serve the Lord, and not men." ¹⁶¹⁾ Therefore, all Christians "Against Satan" can and should be spiritually proud of all the works of their divine ordered calling. ¹⁶²⁾

This truth, that the works of a Christian must be standardized by God's commandment and order and thereby receive their nobility, has been powerfully taught again by Luther from the Scriptures. Luther not only put the Gospel back on the lampstand, but also showed again from God's Word the right form of a Christian life. The Pope had made a caricature out of the Christian life with his commandments of men. Luther should also speak about this in some detail in this book of Dogmatics. He says in his sermon "Of Our Blessed Hope" ¹⁶³⁾: " We have heard many times what good works are,

160) Matt. 19:17.

161) Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:22-24. Luther (I, 527): "Here one should not look at what is said or commanded, but at who is the one who commands it. ... Whoever looks at the one who commands considers that to be the greatest, even what appears to be the least." (Luther in Gr. Cat. 403, 91-93 [Trigl. 607, 3d Com., 91—93 ].)

162) Luther I, 867.

163) On Tit. 2:13. St. L. IX, 952 ff.

since through baptism and the gospel we have come to the light and knowledge that we know what good works are, which was not known in the papacy. Before the Gospel came. So they sermonized that good works were those that we ourselves devised and mentioned out of our own devotion, such as: one went to St. James, the other to another pilgrimage; the former gave the monks into the monastery and had many masses said; the latter put up little wax candles, fasted on bread and water and prayed so many rosaries, etc. But now come the Gospel. Let us preach, then, that good works are not those which we choose of our own accord, but which God has commanded; as when each one does what God has commanded him to do in his position here on earth. A servant does good works when he fears God, believes in Christ, and enters into the obedience of his master. First he is justified before God through faith in Christ; then he walks by faith, leads a godly life, keeps himself temperate and chaste, serves his neighbor, mucks out the stall, gives food to the horses, etc. When he enters into such works, he does better works than any Carthusian. For since he is baptized, believes in Christ, and waits in certain hope for eternal life, he goes forth, is obedient to his Lord, and knows what he does in his calling, that it may please God. Therefore, what he does in his profession is good and precious. It does not seem that they are great, excellent works when he rides in the field, leads in the mill, etc.; but because God's command and order is there, such works, however small they may seem, cannot be and are called anything but vain good works and services of God. So also a maidservant does good works when she does her calling in faith and does what the wife calls for, when she sweeps the house, does the dishes and cooks in the kitchen, and so on. Although such works do not seem like the works of a Carthusian who has a mask around him and opens people's mouths, they are much better and more precious works in the sight of God than those of a Carthusian who wears a hard shirt, keeps his early hours, gets up at night and sings for five hours, does not eat flesh, and so on. For though these are bright and shining works in the sight of the world, yet they have no commandment and order of God; how then can they be good works that please God? Likewise, if a citizen or farmer helps his neighbor, serves him in any way he can, warns him when he sees

that he might suffer harm to his body, wife, child, servants, livestock and goods, he helps him. Where he is in need of his help, etc., such works do not seem to be, but nevertheless they are good and precious works. When worldly authorities rebuke the wicked and protect the pious, when the subjects are subject and obedient to their authorities and do so in faith in Christ and in hope of eternal life, these are good works, even though they do not shine or appear to reason. For what God does on earth through His Christians and saints shall not shine nor appear before the world, but shall be black, despised and condemned by the devil and the world. Again, what the devil does through his hypocrites and false saints shall shine and gleam, so that all the world opens its mouth and noses and marvels at it, as if it were a good, precious thing, when it is all devilish deceit and lies. If one consults reason, the works of a servant, a maid, a lord, a woman, a mayor and a judge are mean, small works compared to that of a Carthusian who watches, fasts, prays, and does not eat flesh; but if one consults the counsel of God, the works of all the Carthusians and monks, if they are all melted into one heap, are not so good as the works of a few poor maidservants who are placed in God's kingdom through baptism, believe in Christ, and wait in faith for the blessed hope. These two matters St. Paul wanted to preserve in Christianity: the knowledge of our Savior Jesus Christ and the knowledge of our commanded office, so that we can learn to recognize our Christian status correctly, namely, first, that we are called through baptism and the gospel to be heirs of eternal life, for which reason we should also wait for the saved hope and appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Secondly, because we have now become Christians and heirs of the kingdom of heaven, that all things which we do by faith in our calling and state are good and precious works indeed; wherefore we also ought to be diligent to do good works. And these two matters we should learn well. The first matter, of blessed hope, we must have for that life, that we may know where we are to abide when that life is ended. The other matters, of good works, we must have for this life, so that we may

know how we should conduct ourselves in our state and office. Therefore, since we have heard what our saved hope is, for which we should wait, we should now also learn what good works are, namely, those that are done by faith, in our commanded office, according to God's commandment and Word. Although such works do not shine before reason, they are precious in the sight of God, and no Carthusian or monk is worthy to see and know them. So, I am a pastor, that is my office; now, if I believe in Christ and wait for the saved hope and go after it, wait for my preaching and do my office, even though my work is of little repute, I do not want to be with all the monks and nuns and with all their works that they do in the monastery. And so, through baptism and through faith in Christ, I have my knowledge of that life, and through the Word of God, a report for this present life, how I should conduct myself in it. So also a wife is a living saint, if she believes in Christ, waits for the blessed hope and appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, and goes after it and does out of it what is the duty of a wife. For our works, which we do in our commanded office, though they be counted base and small works of the world, are precious in the sight of God, if they be done through faith in Christ, and in the hope of eternal life. But, as I said, the world is not worthy to see and recognize a single good work. For as reason knows nothing of the blessed hope of eternal life, neither does it understand what good works are. Thus it thinks: This maid milks the cows, this farmer plows the field: these are all common, small works, which also the heathen do; how then can they be good works? But this one becomes a monk, that one becomes a nun, looks sour, wears a cap, wears a hair shirt: these are special works that other people do not do; therefore they must be good works. This is how reason thinks. Thus one comes from the knowledge of both the blessed hope and good works." Explanations of the same content can be found in all of Luther's writings.¹⁶⁴⁾

164) Especially also in his lectures on Genesis, where he describes the apparently minor works of the patriarchs: [I, 526 ff](#); [762](#); [1161 ff](#); [1179 ff](#); [1310 f.](#); [1479 f.](#); [II, 704](#); [847 ff](#); [1742 f](#). Some chief places from other writings: [III, 1086 ff](#); [IX, 1205 ff](#); [XIII, 2216 ff](#); [XII, 568 ff](#). [892 ff](#). Luther says about the consolation

Good works are done from a willing spirit. ^

Furthermore, the essence of good works is that they are done out of a willing spirit or — which is the same thing — out of love for God. To emphasize this properly, ancient doctrines make use of this paradox: "Good works must not only be good, but also be done well (*bene fieri debent*)."¹⁶⁵ What is not done out of a willing spirit or out of love for God and service to Him is not fulfillment but transgression of the divine law.¹⁶⁶ To remind us of this, Luther prefaces his exposition of each commandment with the words, "We are to fear and love God." Scripture inculcates this quality of good works positively and negatively: positively, by describing works pleasing to God as occurring out of a willing spirit;¹⁶⁷ negatively, by rejecting all works that lack this quality. From this quality of good works, of course, it follows that doing good works is an art that only Christians can do. Non-Christians do their works, which outwardly (*in materia*, Luther says) agree with God's law, in the best case for naturally honorable reasons, for example, out of natural inclination to work, out of natural love for parents, wife, and child, out of natural compassion, but in many cases out of a craving for fame and even in the opinion of covering sins with works and earning salvation. Out of love for God and service to Him, only those men do their works who, through the action of the Holy Spirit, believe the gospel of God's grace in Christ and, as a result of this faith, love the One who first loved them. Here we must again recall Luther's word that good works are done out of heaven,¹⁶⁸ that is, by those who already possess heaven through faith in Christ and therefore offer the works they do on earth to God as

that lies in the certainty of the God-ordained profession ([XIII, 2218](#)): "Let every Christian accustom himself from his youth to be certain that he is in a saved state. Whoever can do this, even if he falls down the stairs and dies, can still say: My father, my mother, my Lord, my wife has called me to go down; therefore I die in a saved state, right obedience and good work, which is pleasing to God." On the satisfaction with earthly calling that results from the knowledge of the divine order: [XIII, 194 ff.](#)

165) Kromayer, *Theol. pos.-pol.* II, 395; in Baier [III, 324](#).

166) Rom. 13:8-10: πλήρωμα οὐκ ὀνόμῳ ἢ ἀγάπῃ. Matt. 22:37-40.

167) Ps. 110:3; 2 Cor. 8:3. 4. 12. 168) [St. L. XII, 136](#).

a sacrifice of thanksgiving.¹⁶⁹⁾ Therefore, the catechisms and dogmatics rightly include in the definition of good works the stipulation that good works are done only by believers or those who have been born again.¹⁷⁰⁾ In this sense, Luther constantly insists on the axiom that "the person must always be good and pious before all good works."¹⁷¹⁾ And to the question of how the person becomes good and pious, he answers: "Whoever believes in Christ, that he was born for us, died and was buried, and also rose from the dead, the same is born again or born anew. There is one who is a new man; for there you have such thoughts that no other Papist or Turk has. ... If then thou continue in this faith, the Holy Spirit is there, baptizing thee, strengthening and increasing thy faith, and putting new understanding into thy heart; he also awakens in thee holy and new thoughts and affections, that thou mayest begin to love God, and to abstain from all ungodly deeds, and to do heartily those things which God would have thee do, loving thy neighbor, avoiding wrath, hatred, and envy." ¹⁷²⁾

The good works of the heathen. ^

In the foregoing, the question of what to think of the good works of the heathen has already been answered. The question has caused much disputation. By the good works of the heathen or of unbelievers in general, one understands such actions that, seen from the external work (*materia*), are done according to the standard of the divine law, which still stands in the hearts of men after the Fall.¹⁷³⁾ That there are such works is attested in the words Rom. 2:14: φύσει τα τον νόμον ποιοῦσιν ["The Gentiles do by nature the things contained in the Law."]. Luther also emphasizes that such

169) Rom. 12:1.

170) [Dietrich, Catechism, St. Louis Edition, Fr. 142](#): "Good works are actions done by those born again through the Holy Spirit, out of true faith, according to God's commandment and law, for God's glory alone and to show our guilty gratitude."


171) Walch XIX, 1225 f. [[St. L. XIX, 1003](#)].

172) [St. L. VII, 1862](#), [Luther \(X, 407\)](#): "Cursed and damned is all life that is lived and sought for its own benefit and good. Cursed are all works that do not walk in love." — The exposition of the Formula of Concord, that only Christians serve God willingly: 643, 16. 17. [[Trigl. 967, Sol. Decl., VI, 16-17](#) [🔗](#)] So especially often the Apology: *Non diligimus, nisi certo statuant corda, quod donata sit nobis remissio peccatorum*; 107, 110 [[Trigl. 153, IV, 110](#) [🔗](#)]; 109, 1 ff. etc. [[157, III, 1 ff.](#) [🔗](#)]

173) Rom. 2:15; 1:32.

works, viewed in terms of outward action, for example, feed the hungry, clothing the naked, helping the afflicted, working diligently and with perseverance in one's calling or trade, etc., are quite similar to the works of a Christian, indeed, they surpass them in reputation. What is to be thought of these works? It is not a doctrine leading to right clarity to say, for instance, "The good works of the unregenerate are rightly called sin, but not in themselves and absolutely." The better way of teaching is when, with the Lutheran Confessions, we refer the good works of the heathen and those of the Christians to the two entirely different areas to which they actually belong. The good works of the heathen belong to the field of civil righteousness (*iustitia civilis*) or the world kingdom. In this field we praise them as highly as the Confession does, adding — also with the Confession — that God rewards such works also in this world with temporal goods.¹⁷⁵⁾ After all, God also wants the world kingdoms, namely as scaffolding for the construction of his church. And inasmuch as civil righteousness is the mainstay of the world kingdoms, God also rewards the works of civil righteousness with temporal rewards. This is the glory and value of the good works of the unbelievers in the civil sphere. But if we ask about their value in the spiritual sphere or in the sphere of the Christian church, they are to be called sin not merely secundum quid, but absolutely and without qualification, because Scripture says without any qualification that the heathen are dead in sins,¹⁷⁶⁾ alienated from the life that is of God,¹⁷⁷⁾ living without hope and without God in the world,¹⁷⁸⁾ going to mute idols,

174) St. L. II, 461 ff. Luther cites Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and Scipio, "who are known to have done greater deeds than any Christian ever did; for you will not easily find such strength in war, such patience, and how they endured all kinds of misfortune and hardship in any kings among Christians; nor even among the kings of the people of Israel, as in David and the others.








175) Apology 91, 24 [Trigl. 127, IV, 24 II, 472).

176) Eph. 2:1. 177) Eph. 4:18. 178) Eph. 2:12.

how they are led,¹⁷⁹⁾ what they sacrifice, not to God but to the devils.¹⁸⁰⁾ Therefore, we sharply distinguish between the world kingdom and the Christian church with the Lutheran Confessions. In the world kingdom, the good works of the heathen are good; in the realm of the Christian church, they are sin. Thus throughout the Lutheran Confessions;¹⁸¹⁾ and one must wonder that in the Christian Church another doctrine was and is allowed to dare to come to light. The Apology presents the matter clearly and sharply from Scripture: "If one is carnally minded against God, then truly the best good works are unclean and sinful, which an Adam's child may always do. Again: If the flesh cannot be subject to God's law, then a man also truly sins, even if he does noble, beautiful, precious good works, which the world esteems great. The adversaries only see the commandments on the other tablet of Moses, which also addresses outward respectability, which reason understands better, and want to think that they are keeping God's law with such outward good works. But they do not look at the first tablet, which commands us to love God sincerely, not to waver or doubt that God is angry because of sin, to fear God sincerely, to trust in our hearts that God is not far away, that He hears our prayer, etc. Now, before we are born again by the Holy Spirit, we are all of Adam in such a way that our heart certainly despises God's wrath, judgment and forbearance, is hateful and hostile to His judgment and rebuke. If then all the children of Adam are born in such great sins that we all of a kind despise God, doubting His Word, promise and forbearance, then truly our best good works, which we do before we are born again by the Holy Spirit, must be sinful and condemned works in the sight of God, even if they are beautiful in the sight of the world, for they proceed from an evil, ungodly, unclean heart, as Paul says Rom. 14:23: 'Whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.' For all such saints of works do works without faith, despising God in their hearts and believing as little that God would take care of them, as

179) 1 Cor. 12:2.

180) 1 Cor. 10:20.

181) A.C., art. 18 [[Trigl 51, Augsb. Conf. XVIII](#) ]; Apol. 89, 16 [[124, Apol., IV, 16](#) ]; 589, 7 [[883, F. C., Sol. Decl., II, 7](#) ]; 594, 26 [[891, ibid., 26](#) ]; 602, 59 - 603, 61 [[905, ibid., 59, 61](#) ]; 608, 85. [[913, ibid., 85](#) ] The quotations of the Formula of Concord in the 2nd article from the earlier confessional writings and from Luther: 595, 28 ff. [[Trigl. 893, ibid., 28 ff.](#) ]

Epicurus believed. The contempt of God inwardly must ever make the works obscene and sinful, even if they are beautiful before men; for God searches the hearts." In this truth, that all works done before faith are sin before God, it is founded that the transition from the world kingdom to the Christian church, that is, conversion, does not take place with human cooperation, but is in *solidum* a work of grace on God's part. The Formula of Concord expresses this in Luther's words: "Because outside of Christ death and sin are our masters and the devil is our god and prince, there can be no strength nor power, no wit nor understanding, so that we could send or strive for righteousness and life."¹⁸²⁾

False doctrines of the good works of unbelievers are all those who in any way ascribe to man a cooperation in obtaining the grace of God and salvation, and thus actually deny that all works done before faith are sin. Here belong the Pelagians, Semipelagians, and Synergists of old and new times and of all shades. In order to keep the foundation of its doctrine of works intact, the papal church curses all who teach that all works before justification are really (*vere*) sin.¹⁸³⁾ Positive newer theologians also deny that all works done without faith in Christ are sin before God. Hofmann assumes that the heathen may attain justification on the Last Day on the basis of the works they have done according to the testimony of conscience.¹⁸⁴⁾ That all Unitarians ascribe good works to the heathen is only consistent, since they themselves stand *extra ecclesiam* and do not want to deny the predicate "good" to their own works.¹⁸⁵⁾

182) F.C. 598, 43 [[Trigl. 897, F. C., Sol. Decl., II, 43](#) [🔗](#)].

183) Tridentinum, *sess. VI, can. 7*: *Si quis dixerit, opera omnia, quae ante iustificationem fiunt, quacumque ratione facta sint, vere esse peccata vel odium Dei mereri — anathema sit.* [[Google](#)]

184) [Schriftbeweis I, 470 f.](#); cf. Baier [II, 230](#).

185) So the Socinian [Valentin Schmalz](#) in visp. 6. *de bonis operibus* against Wolfgang Franz: *Certum est hominem etiam non-renatum, natura et ratione duce, bona opera praestare, licet non ita perfecte quemadmodum is, qui renatus est, nec etiam ita perfecta, nec Deo etiam ita accepta, quemadmodum ea sunt, quae quis amore Christi facit.* [[Google](#)] Cf. Schneckenburger, [Small Church Parties, p. 56](#).

The quality of the good works of Christians. ^

If we call the good works of the heathen in the spiritual sphere, or the sphere of the church, sin, the question again arises as to how the good works of Christians stand, because an examination of them reveals the fact that they are deficient both as to being normed by God's commandment and as to the willingness of the disposition from which they flow. As for the deficit in being normed, Scripture not only contains warnings addressed to Christians against the ἐθελοθρησκεία [self-appointed worship],¹⁸⁶⁾ but we also learn from Scripture itself the fact that, for example, members of the Roman congregation mistakenly counted¹⁸⁷⁾ abstention from the consumption of flesh and wine as part of the right form of their Christian walk.¹⁸⁸⁾ The actual deficit with regard to the willingness of the mind is present in the confession of the Apostle: "I delight in God's law according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, which opposeth the law in my mind, and taketh me captive unto the law of sin, which is in my members."¹⁸⁹⁾ That the works of Christians are nevertheless called good and highly praised,¹⁹⁰⁾ comes from the fact that Christians stand in faith in the forgiveness of sins, and through this faith they are also continually forgiven for the sins that still cling to their good works with regard to their deficient standardization and willingness. Christ's atoning blood, which sprinkles the person of Christians, *eo ipso* also sprinkles their works. Christ's perfect righteousness covers, as the person of Christians, so also the imperfection of their deeds.¹⁹¹⁾ It is therefore scriptural terminology when, for example, Baier defines good works thus: "What makes good works good works, when considered in themselves, is their conformity to God's law; but if they are considered pleasing to God, even though they do not correspond exactly to the law,"

186) Col. 2:16-23.

187) Rom. 14:14.

188) Rom. 14:1 ff.

189) Rom. 7:22-23.

190) Rom. 15:14; 1 Cor. 1:7; Phil. 2:12; Col. 1:4; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 2:3-4.

191) 1 Joh. 2:1-2: παράκλητον εχομεν προς τον πατέρα, Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν οἰκαῖον. ["We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous; and He is the Propitiation for our sins"]

faith in Christ makes them good works."¹⁹²⁾ Numerous sayings of the Confessions and Luther belong here.¹⁹³⁾

The quantity of good works. ^

It should not really be necessary to discuss the quantity of good works to be striven for. If it stands firm that Christ has bought Christians not only half, but completely with his blood, then it is also self-evident that they place themselves completely at his service with everything they have. This is how the Scriptures describe Christians.¹⁹⁴⁾ This is also the way the Christians are minded according to the new man.¹⁹⁵⁾ But the flesh still clinging to the Christians

192) Baier (III, 326): *Forma seu ratio formalis operum bonorum, quando in se spectantur, est conformitas cum lege Dei; quando autem spectantur, quatenus, licet legi exacte non convenientia, tamen Deo placent, sic forma eorum est fides in Christ.* [Google]

193) Apology: *Praeclare inquit Augustinus: Omnia mandata Dei implentur, quando, quidquid non fit, ignoscitur.* (118, 51. [Trigl. 171, III, 51 ☞]) The same: *Haec opera, etsi adhuc a perfectione legis procul absint, tamen placent propter fidem, qua iusti reputamur, quia credimus nos propter Christ habere placatum Deum.* (138, 172. [Trigl. 203, Apol., III, 172 ☞]) — Formula of Concord: "It is also without dispute how and why the good works of believers, though in this flesh and imperfect, are pleasing' and acceptable to God, namely, for the Lord Christ's sake through faith, because the person is acceptable to God." (626, 8. [Trigl. 941, Sol. Decl., IV, 8 ☞]) The same: "But how and why the good works of believers, though imperfect and impure in this life on account of sin in the flesh, are nevertheless pleasing and acceptable to God, this is not taught by Vau's law, which requires a completely perfect, pure obedience where it is to please God. But the gospel teaches that our spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God through faith for Christ's sake, 1 Pet. 2; Heb. 11." (644, 22. [Trigl. 969, ibid., 22 ☞])

194) Rom. 12:1; Is. 60:6. 9: "They will all come from Saba, bringing gold and incense and proclaiming the Lord's praise. The isles wait for me, and the ships of the sea long ago, to bring thy children from afar, with their silver and gold." Luther (XII, 312): "This must be the opinion of Isaiah, that the people of this land of Arabia will gather in great multitudes for the faith and the Gospel, and will offer themselves there with all their goods, camels, runners, gold, incense, and whatever they have. For where true Christians are, there they give themselves and everything they have to serve Christ and his people. As we see that also here on our side it has happened that great goods are given to the church, and everyone gives himself with all that he has willingly and gladly to Christ and his own, as of the Philippians and Corinthians St. Paul also writes 2 Cor. 8."

195) Gal. 2:20; Ps. 110:3.

pulls in the opposite direction, and Christians in this state of affairs are in great danger of misusing the doctrine of grace for indulgence in good works. This abuse was found in the apostolic church, as is evident from the warnings of Scripture.¹⁹⁶⁾ It was also found in the Church at the time of the Reformation, as is evident from Luther's complaints.¹⁹⁷⁾ And we would have to close our eyes to clearly revealed facts if we did not want to see this abuse also in the church of our time.¹⁹⁸⁾ In order to defend against this abuse, Scripture addresses not only the quality, but also often and much the quantity of good works. Christians are not merely to take care of one or another godly work, but to become rich in good works.¹⁹⁹⁾ They should not just let the works that are due to them as Christians come to them, but should chase after them like zealots²⁰⁰⁾ and never tire of doing good.²⁰¹⁾ They should not merely serve God on the side during their life on earth, but use the time of their earthly life to do good works.²⁰²⁾ And so that Christians do not forget this, God has done something else: he has instructed those whom he has appointed as teachers and guardians in his congregation to pay attention not only to the quality but also to the quantity of works. Paul reminds Titus: "This I want you to teach firmly, so that those who have become faithful in God may be careful (φοοντίζουσι) to be found in the state of good works."²⁰³⁾ Especially they should also take care that the rich of this world become rich in good works, give gladly, be helpful (κοινωνικοί).²⁰⁴⁾

It is very important that the ministers of the Church have a good grasp of the Christian doctrine of good works and know how to use it practically. First of all, for their own person, so that as *ministri Dei et ecclesiae* they are not left with a minimum of official works,

196) Gal. 5:13; 6:6-10; Titus 3:14.

197) [St. L. XI, 301; X, 456 ff.](#)

198) [Southern Illinois District Synodal Report 1913](#), pp. 42 ff.

199) 2 Cor. 8:7, 20; 9:8, 11. 200) Tit. 2:14; 2 Cor. 8:4.

201) Gal. 6:9. 202) Gal. 6:10; Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5.

203) Tit. 3:8: καλὸν ἔργον προΐσταςθαι, also v. 14, to devote oneself to good works, to conduct as one's proper business. This thought is illustrated by Luther's translation: "to be found in the state of good works" well expressed. Cf. Meyer on this passage

204) 1 Tim. 6:17-19.

after the manner of the faithless teachers and watchmen of Israel, who were lazy, lying down, and fond of sleeping,²⁰⁵⁾ but may be intent on a maximum of their official activity, after the example of the apostle and other faithful teachers.²⁰⁶⁾ Luther's well-known words belong here: "Therefore, pastor and preacher, our office has now become a different thing than it was under the Pope; it has now become serious and salutary; therefore it now has much more toil and labor, danger and temptation, in addition to little reward and thanks in the world. But Christ will be our reward, if we labor faithfully."²⁰⁷⁾ Then the ministers of the Church should make it their concern that those among whom they have the teaching office also accumulate a great treasure of good works. In order to achieve this purpose, it is necessary that they teach good works not timidly and shyly, but firmly and with joy. Experience shows that good works are often taught timidly. There are several reasons for this. One reason is the fear that the doctrine of justification without the works of the law would be pushed out of the center by the decisive teaching of good works. We can give room to this fear only to the extent that the scriptural connection between justification and good works is pushed into the background. It is impossible to teach sanctification and good works in the scriptural sense without teaching justification at the same time, because only the pure grace of God shown to us in Christ can be used as the motive of sanctification and good works. Thus Paul taught good works, "I exhort you by the mercies of God (δια τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ), that ye present your bodies a sacrifice, living, holy, acceptable unto God."²⁰⁸⁾ Therefore, the more decidedly we teach good works in the sense of Scripture, the more decidedly we at the same time place in the foreground the free grace of God in Christ. And if we follow this method of teaching good works strictly and untiringly, the result will not infrequently astonish us even on the quantitative side, in spite of the flesh that still clings to Christians. Here too we recall Walther's

205) Is. 56:10.

206) 1 Cor. 15:10; 1 Tim. 4:15; 2 Tim. 4:2.

207) [St. L. X, 5](#).

208) Rom. 12:1; 2 Cor. 8:9.

words: "All true Christians are of such a nature that with an urgent exhortation one can, so to speak, accomplish everything with them. For this very reason, so many pastors do so little with their Christians when they want to persuade them to good works or to dissuade them from unrighteousness, that instead of exhorting (through the mercy of God shown), they demand, command, threaten and rebuke. They do not suspect what a powerful weapon they have and do not use. Righteous Christians, though afflicted with many an infirmity, do not, after all, wish to reject God's Word; they gladly want to live to Him who died for them."²⁰⁹⁾ Walther also cites Luther's words in this context: "A preacher of the law presses on with threats and punishments; a preacher of grace entices and tempts with demonstrated divine goodness and mercy, for he does not like unwilling works and unpleasant service; he wants to have joyful and pleasurable services of God. Whoever does not allow himself to be tempted and enticed by such sweet, lovely words of God's mercy, so lavishly bestowed and given to us in Christ, that he may also do so with pleasure and love in honor of God and for the benefit of his neighbor, is nothing, and all is lost in him. How can a man become soft and cheerful with laws and sorrows who does not melt and flow before such fire of heavenly love and grace? It is not man's mercy, but God's mercy, which is given to us, and which St. Paul would have us regard, to provoke and move us." ²¹⁰⁾

Because the question of the quantity of gifts for the missionary activity of the Church has been dealt with a lot in our American Church, especially on the occasion of the so-called "lay movement", a Dogmatics should also deal with this subject. Pretty much all over the country, at the expense of a "layman", a book has been circulated: *The Tithe*.²¹¹⁾ In it is lamented the fact that Christians in "rich America," calculated on the individual, contribute less than two dollars a year to missions at home and in the heathen lands. This fact, he said, is shameful to Christians and an offence to the world. The blame for this is attributed first and foremost to the theological professors,

209) *Pastorale*, p. 86. 210) St. L. XII, 318 f.

211) *The Tithe*. By Rev. E. B. Stewart. Introduction by Layman. The Winona Publishing Co. 1903. XXII and 82 pp.

because they taught the prospective pastors "that we laymen and lay women owe everything to God in general, but nothing in particular, nothing definite; that the time of payment, manner of payment, and even the amount of payment of whatever we owe, or think we owe, or somebody else tells us we owe, is left entirely to our natural disposition to benevolence or stinginess, or to our moods and caprices". The very well-meaning "layman" therefore advocates the introduction of tithing in the sense "that the tithe is — not was — God's law for the human race, and that the obligation to pay it is as binding now as it ever was." He has given up hope for the betterment of the present generation of professors and newspaper editors, but hopes that the next generation will return to the biblical doctrine of tithing. To this we say: We Lutheran professors deplore and rebuke as sin the obvious fact that by New Testament Christians the exemption from Old Testament tithing is misused for indolence in giving for the purposes of the church, especially for missions. Luther also did this abundantly.²¹²⁾

212) Luther (IX, 748): "This sin" (when Christians do not give for the gospel) "must necessarily be followed by the most severe punishments, and I truly believe that the congregations in Galatia, Corinth, etc., were broken up by the false prophets from no other cause than because they neglected their right teachers." Of his time Luther says (X, 456 ff.): "That we have the Gospel and the Ministry, what is it but the blood and sweat of our Lord? He has acquired it through his fearful, bloody sweat. ... If Christ, the Son of God, deserves nothing else from us, but that some pursue his dear ministry, and others withdraw their hand, neither feeding pastors nor preachers, nor giving anything to preserve it; and that the children also turn away from it, lest such a ministry should soon perish, and Christ's blood and suffering be in vain. ... If it is to be like this in German lands, I am sorry that I was born a German or that I have ever spoken or written German. And if I could do it before my conscience, I would again counsel and help that the pope with all his abominations should again come upon us and press, defile, and destroy worse than has ever happened before. Before, when people served the devil and desecrated Christ's blood, all pockets stood open, and there was no measure of giving to churches, schools and all abominations; children could be driven into monasteries, convents, churches, schools, pushed and forced with unspeakable costs, so that everything was lost. Now, however, one should establish proper schools and proper churches, ... there are all bags locked with iron chains. I ask God for a merciful hour, that he may take me away and not let me see the misery that must go over Germany. ... God grant that I must lie and be a false prophet in this piece,

But it is a characteristic of the Christian church that it does not command anything that is not commanded in Scripture. Now, the commandment of tithing is one of the legal ordinances that are dismissed in the New Testament. The Scriptures of the New Testament often exhort to abundant and untiring giving, but they leave the quantity and the circumstances of the gifts to Christian discernment and freedom. It says: "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and he who sows in blessing will also reap in blessing. Each according to his own will" (ἐκαστος καθὼς προήρηται τῇ καρδίᾳ, as each one purposeth in his heart), "not with unwillingness or from compulsion."²¹³⁾ Further, "Make yourselves rich in this benefit! I do not say that I command" (κατ' ἐπιταγὴν, by command), "but because others are so diligent, I try your love, whether it be right. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he was poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. And my well-meaning herein" (γνώμην, opinion, in contrast to ἐπιταγή, v. 8) "I give."²¹⁴⁾ The apostle leaves it at these "glittering generalities" when he wants to accomplish something certain. Luther says: "In the Old Testament it was commanded that over and above all the annual tithes given to the Levites, they should set aside a special tithe every three years for the poor, widows, and orphans, etc." (1). Now, such giving is not set forth by name in the New Testament, nor is it laid down by law; for it is a time of grace, when every man is exhorted voluntarily to do such things, as Paul saith Gal. 6:6, 'He that is instructed in the word, let him impart all manner of good things unto him that instructs him.'" ²¹⁵⁾ The reason why the quantity of gifts in the New Testament is left to Christians, and the legal determination of the same is done away with, is given by Scripture in the words, "As long as the heir is a child, there is no difference between him and a servant, though he be lord of all goods, but he is under guardians and custodians until the certain time from his father. So also we, being children,

which will happen if we mend our ways and honor our Lord's word and His precious blood and death differently than has happened until now." (Cf. IX, 1200 ff.; XI, 301.)

213) 2 Cor. 9:6. 7.

214) 2 Cor. 8:7-10. 215) St. L. XII, 337.

were imprisoned under the outward statutes." ²¹⁶⁾ Because in the New Testament the sun of God's grace in Christ shines in full splendor, it is God's will that Christians should no longer be children, but mature people who, out of a willing spirit of filiation, do everything and more, even in financial matters, that was prescribed for the people of the Old Testament by external statutes. If, therefore, we confine ourselves to inciting and enticing Christians to give diligently and untiringly for the Gospel, remembering the wonderful love of God in Christ, these are not powerless "generalities," but divine-strong motives by which counter-love is always awakened in the hearts of Christians and kindled to clear flame. Looking at the head crowned with thorns of their Savior²¹⁷⁾, their gifts for the Gospel take on both the right quality and the right quantity. In this, it goes without saying that it is not in the nature of law for us to rebuke slothful giving for the gospel with the same earnestness that the apostle uses against the Christians in the apostolic congregations, for example, in the words, "Do not be deceived; God is not mocked!" ²¹⁸⁾ But with this we address the Christians according to the old man, who is to be kept in check outwardly with punishments and threats.²¹⁹⁾ We expect good works from Christians according to the new man, who, oppressed by the flesh, is to be strengthened by the divine love shown. Likewise, it is self-evident that it is not an Old Testament-legal thing for Christians to impose tithes or fifths on themselves out of a voluntary spirit, and also to follow the method of regular giving according to the apostle's reminder²²⁰⁾. The misunderstanding that he thereby commanded something in a legal way, he himself has defended against.²²¹⁾

216) Gal. 4:1-3.

217) 2 Cor. 8:9.

218) Gal. 6, 7.

219) F.C. 645, 24.

220) 1 Cor. 16, 1, 2.

221) 2 Cor. 8:8, 9. The whole matter of Christian giving for the Gospel is treated in detail in the [Synodal Report of the Southern Illinois District of 1913](#) (pp. 37-62) under Thesis II: "The 'Lay Movement' in Financial Relation," with the subsections: "1. The Size of Gifts. 2. the danger of small gifts 3. The salary of the pastors and teachers of the Word of God. 4. The cause and cure of financial sloth."

10. The reward of good works. [^]

Scripture does not merely speak of a reward (μισθός),²²²⁾ but also of a great reward (μισθός πολύς)²²³⁾ of the good works of Christians. Therefore, one must not be forbidden to use the word "reward" because of the abuse that is made of this word. Therefore, to remain with the Scriptures, we unhesitatingly teach publicly and specifically that God rewards the good works of Christians, already here in time, but especially in eternity.²²⁴⁾ The world does not have the grace, says Luther,²²⁵⁾ to recognize and reward the good works of Christians, for example, their preaching of the Gospel in the world, their prayer and intercession. On the contrary, Christians are hated and persecuted by the world precisely because of their best works.²²⁶⁾ Under these circumstances, God cannot refrain from taking care of the good works of Christians with a reward.

But this reward — so the Scriptures further instruct us — is to be understood strictly as a reward of grace. Whoever submits an account to God on the basis of his works, thereby submits his request for release from the kingdom of God, because in the kingdom of God only grace is valid. This double truth, that God rewards the works of Christians, but that the reward is not an obligatory or legal wage, but a reward of grace, is expressed especially clearly and sharply in Matt. 19:27-20:16 is expressed. At this point Peter raises the question of wages. Peter reminds the Lord of the fact that they, the disciples, unlike the young man who did not want to leave his goods, left everything and followed the Lord. Peter therefore asks the question, "What will be our reward (τί ἀρα ἔσται ἡμῖν)?" To this the Lord answers two things: 1. That all the works done to him, Christ,²²⁷⁾ will find reward, and a great reward at that;²²⁸⁾ 2. but that the raising of a legal claim on the basis of works turns the first into the last, that is, from children of grace into children of disgrace, who receive the reward

222) 1 Cor. 3:8. 223) Matt. 5:12; Luke 6:23, 35.

224) 1 Tim. 4:8; Luke 14:14.

225) On Gal. 3:22. (St. L. IX, 443; Erl., lat., II, 100.)

226) Because of the sermon of the gospel, the apostles are blamed, Acts 5:40. — Rom. 8:36; 1 Cor. 4:13.

227) Matt. 19:29: ἐνεχεν τὸν ὀνόματος μὲν οὖν.

228) Matt. 19:29: πας δὲ ἀφήκεν οὐκίας ...εκατονταπλασίονα [other reading: πολλαπλασίονα] λήγεται καὶ ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσει.

of the righteous by works, damnation.²²⁹⁾ Concerning the correct interpretation of this passage, which has experienced such strange misinterpretations in our time, Luther says:²³⁰⁾ "We stick to the simple doctrine and opinion of Christ, who wants to show with this parable how it is in the kingdom of heaven, that is, in Christianity on earth, that God judges and works there in a strange way, namely in this way: that he makes the first the last and the last the first. And all is said to humble those who are something, that they should rely on nothing but God's goodness and mercy; again, that those who are nothing should not despair, but rely on God's goodness as well as those. So now Christ first of all frightens the presumptuousness of those who fence with works to heaven, as the Jews did and wanted to be the closest to God, as our clergy have also done up to now. These all work for certain wages ... and despise those who have done nothing at all, and their great toil and labor shall be counted no more than that idleness and loose living. Then they murmur against the householder, which seemeth them not right, and blaspheme the gospel, and are hardened in their doings; then they lose the favor and grace of God, and must take away their temporal reward, and trot away with their penny, and be damned: for they have not served for everlasting favor, but for reward; which they shall have, and no more. But the others must confess that they have earned neither the penny nor the favor, but more is given them than they would have thought was promised them. These remain in grace and are saved for it, because they have enough time here, too, for it all depends on the good will of the father of the house." The fact that a legal claim made on the basis of works results in exclusion from the kingdom of God should not alienate anyone who has some

229) Gal. 3:10: οσοι εξ έργων είσ'ιν υπό κατάραν είσιν. — Quite apart from whether the words πολλοί γάρ εις κλητοί, ολίγοι δε εκλεκτοί belong to the text or not, by the way, the words stand in *C. D. It. Syr.* Meyer also considers them genuine, though for a wrong reason, namely, their "apparent impropriety" in this place, which may have caused their omission in B. L. etc. had caused. If anywhere, just here the words fit the context, as will be shown below.

230) St. L. XII. 508 ff.

knowledge of what Christianity is. A Christian is a Christian not by any faith, but by the faith that "builds on pure grace," that is, holds that God gives him righteousness, eternal life, and all things by grace for Christ's sake, without merit of works. Now if someone submits a wage claim to God on the basis of his works, he thereby gives up the faith through which he is a Christian. As surely as the reward of grace is not only compatible with faith in grace, but also strengthens faith in grace,²³¹⁾ the demand for a legal reward is the death of faith in grace. We therefore also hold that a Christian, in so far as he is a Christian or a new man, does not at all come to the thought, which is monstrous from the Christian standpoint, of placing himself on the legal standpoint toward God on the basis of his works. A look at the quality of his works also keeps him from this. He sees that his works are stained with sins²³²⁾ and need divine forgiveness, so that they do not condemn him. So how should he come to demand a reward for his works!²³³⁾ The thought of the *causa efficiens* of his good works also keeps him from it. Certainly, he, the Christian, does the works. But he does not do them out of his natural nature. It is God who works the works in him and through him with his divine grace and power. What comes from his own natural nature is only hindrance and defilement of the works. If God nevertheless rewards the works, He thereby crowns His own work in the Christian. So how would a Christian, as a Christian, come to want to make himself tributary to God on the basis of his good works!²³⁴⁾

231) Because the reward is given purely by grace for the sake of Christ's merit. Chemnitz, *Examen*, p. 185. The reward of grace, even in bodily things, does not push the grace of God in Christ into the background, but brings it even more into the field of vision.

232) Chemnitz remarks on Is. 64:6 ("All our righteousness is like a foul garment"): Non de lapsibus, sed de bonis operibus loquitur propheta. (*Examen*, p. 187.)


233) Quenstedt (II, 1421): *An potest postulare a Deo solutionem debitorum, qui quotidie debet petere a Deo: Dimitte nobis debita nostra? An meretur praemium aeternum, qui quotidie deprecatur poenam aeternam? Aut qua fronte potest ostentare merita, cui petenda semper est venia?* [[Google](#)]

234) Chemnitz (*Examen*, p. 188): *Non sumus idonei ex nobis ipsis, 2 Cor. 3, sed Deus est, qui operatur in nobis et ut velimus et ut faciamus*

But now it stands that the Christian also has the old man about him, who asserts *opinio legis* against the Christian concept of grace and thereby puts the Christian in danger of losing grace and salvation. Hence Christ's admonition to the Twelve and to all Christians until the Last Day to take care that they do not become last from first. Luther addresses this powerfully, even applying it to himself. He says: " It is certainly necessary in our times that this gospel be preached to those who now know the gospel, to me and my kind, who can teach and master all the world and consider ourselves to be the next and have eaten up God's spirit pure with feathers and legs. For how is it that so many sects have arisen, one doing this, the other doing that in the gospel? Therefore it is without doubt that no one pays attention to them, that this passage affects them or concerns them: 'The first are the last'. ... Did it not happen the same way to the Pope? Since he did not mean anything else to his own, but that he was God's governor and the nearest of all, he also persuaded the world; but in the same way he became the devil's governor and the farthest from God, so that no man under the sun ever raged and raged against God and his Word. And yet he did not see the abominable treachery, for he was sure and did not fear this subtle, sharp, high, excellent judgment: 'The first are last'. For it strikes at the very depth of the heart, at one's own spiritual conceit, which even in poverty, dishonor, misfortune considers itself the first, yes, then most of all. ... So that God says: The first shall be last,' he takes away all presumption from thee, and forbids thee to exalt thyself above any harlot, though thou be Abraham, David, Peter, or Paul. But in that he saith: "The last shall be first," he defends you from all despair, and forbids you to be above any saint, even if you were Pilate, Herod, Sodom and Gomorrah. For as we have no cause to presume, neither have we cause to despair: but the middle way is strengthened and preserved by this gospel,

aliqua ipsi grata, Phil. 2. quod si igitur accepisti, quid gloriaris quasi non acceperis ? 1 Cor. 4. Non igitur debitum ex vera et propria ratione meriti, sed misericordia et bonitas Dei est, quod dona sua in nobis Deus coronat.
[\[Google\]](#)

that we should not look to the penny, but to the goodness of the Father of the house, which is the same and the same over high and low, first and last, saints and sinners; and that no man should boast of it, or be comforted by it, or be presumptuous of it, more than another; for he is God not only of the Jews, but also of the heathen, even of all, whatsoever they be or be called."

That a semipelagian-synergistic theology cannot find itself in this sense of the warning words: "The first will be the last, and the last will be the first",²³⁵⁾ is only natural, because it has eliminated the Christian concept of grace from theology in principle by letting the origin of faith and the staying in faith depend on *aliquid in homine* (on the right behavior, self-decision, self-setting etc.). That is why Thieme can also report of the modern positive theologians: "The Lutheran dogma, *quod bona opera penitus excludenda sint, non tantum cum de iustificatione fidei agitur, sed etiam cum de salute nostra aeterna disputatur* (F. C. 531, 7 [*Trigl. 799, F.C., Epit., IV, 7* ]), is held by only a few Lutherans nowadays."²³⁶⁾ But if, in addition to the grace of God, good works are necessary for the attainment of salvation, grace and therefore also the reward of grace are thus eliminated from the Christian doctrine, and in its place, on principle, the reward of merit is set. It is equally futile to discuss with the Romans the question whether the reward of good works is a reward of grace or a reward of merit, because the Roman doctrine of the way to salvation has its essence in the fact that good works "truly merit" (*vere mereri*) justification and salvation.²³⁷⁾ The Romans only disagree among themselves about whether good works "truly" deserve salvation half or fully. The Tridentine distributes the attainment of salvation from Christ's merit and to the merit of works.²³⁸⁾ A number of Roman theologians,

235) Meyer, for example, finds in the warning of Christ the thought expressed that only a few in the kingdom of God bring it to a first-class performance and reward; Lange, for example, that in the kingdom of God it does not depend on extensive as well as intensive activity; Nösgen, for example, that the reward is conditioned by the faithfulness. These are all interpretations that stand in direct contradiction to the context.

236) RE. 3 XXI, 120. 237) Trident, *sess. VI, cap. 16* and *can. 32*.

238) Trident, *sess. VI, cap. 16*: *Ideo bene operantibus usque in finem et in Deo sperantibus proponenda est vita aeterna et tanquam gratia filiis Dei per Christ Iesum misericorditer promissa et tanquam merces ex*

especially Jesuits, reject this distribution and want that good works alone, apart from Christ's merit, truly deserve salvation. [Andradius](#), the interpreter of the decisions of the Council of Trent, rejects it as contrary to Scripture and inconsistent if the bestowal of eternal life is divided between Christ's merit and the merit of our works, since Paul says: "To him who does works, the reward is imputed not by grace, but by duty." Andradius wants it recorded that the pious, with their good works, are no less deserving of salvation than the wicked, with their evil works, are deserving of eternal torment. The [Jesuit Vasquez](#) says, "that the works of the righteous have nothing to do with Christ's merits or person".²³⁹⁾ [Quenstedt](#), who otherwise writes with a certain reserve, adds here, "Satan so puffs up these men and so charms them by the conceit of their own merits that they fall out of Christ's righteousness and, leaning on a cane, sink down."²⁴⁰⁾ by the way, these disagreements among the Romans are of practically no importance, since even in the distribution of merit to Christ and good works the Christian concept of "grace" and therefore of "reward of grace" is completely abandoned: "If it is by grace, it is not by merit of works, otherwise grace would not be grace."²⁴¹⁾ More important to the polemic is to point out another attempted deception of the Romans. When the Romans ascribe to works a half or whole merit or duty reward and describe such works as "done in God" and done by "living members of Christ,"²⁴²⁾ they are reckoning with quantities that do not exist at all. Works,

ipsius Dei promissione bonis ipsorum operibus et meritis fideliter reddenda. [[Google](#)] [Chemnitz](#) (*Examen*, p. 186) remarks: "The reader should note that it seemed too impertinent to the Tridentine Fathers found it too impudent to attribute eternal life to our merits alone.. Therefore, they exercise some modesty and, for the sake of honor, distribute eternal life between Christ's merit and the merits of our works."

239) *Operibus iustorum nullam accessionem dignitatis provenire ex meritis Christi aut ex eius persona*. Cf. the quotations in Quenstedt from the writings of the *modestiores* and *crassiores Pontificii*, II, 1421 sq. [[Google](#)].

240) [Quenstedt](#) I. c.: *Satan hos homines inflat et meritorum suorum persuasione fascinat, ut iustitia Christi excidant et ficulneo adminiculo innixi corruant.* [[Google](#)]

241) Rom. 11:6.

242) Trident, sess. VI, can. 32.

with which one "really" (*vere*) wants to earn salvation are not done "in God" but against God.²⁴³⁾ Such works are also not rewarded, but are under God's curse.²⁴⁴⁾ Also, such works are not done by "living members of Christ", but by those who have lost Christ²⁴⁵⁾ or have not yet become members of the body of Christ at all.²⁴⁶⁾ The situation is therefore this: As long as a man stands with his thoughts still *extra muros ecclesiae*, that is, has not yet recognized that man is in possession of salvation by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, without works, so long, when the reward of good works is addressed, he always thinks only of a reward of merit and not of a reward of grace. But as soon as someone has received Christian thoughts through the gospel, that is, believes in the forgiveness of sins and the salvation that Christ has completely acquired and offers in the gospel, his thoughts about the reward of good works also take on a Christian form, namely, that the reward can only ever be a reward of grace, as Christ so powerfully inculcates in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. Therefore, The Apology also says: "We do not quarrel about the word 'wages'. If the adversaries admit that we are justified by faith for Christ's sake, and that good works are pleasing to God for faith's sake, we will not afterwards make a great dispute about the word 'wages'. We confess that eternal life is a reward because it is something that comes to us (*res debita*) because of the promise, not because of our merits. ... Further, we say that good works are truly meritorious and *meritoria*. Not that they should merit forgiveness of sins or make us righteousness before God. For they are not pleasing to God; they are done by those whose sins are already forgiven. Neither are they worthy of eternal life, but are meritorious of other gifts which are given in this life and after this life."²⁴⁷⁾

In what sense the Scriptures speak of a reward of good works, Luther takes thus:²⁴⁸⁾ "In the end there remains to act a question, because in this sermon we have heard,

243) Rom. 10:3.

244) Gal. 3:10.

245) Gal. 5:4.

246) Rom. 9:31. 32.

247) Apol. 147, 241. 246. [[Trigl 219, III, 241](#),

[☞](#), [246](#) [☞](#)]

248) In his explanation of chapters 5, 6 and 7 of the Gospel of Matthew, [St. L. VII, 666 ff.](#)

that Christ presses so hard on works, saying ch. 5:3, 7: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'; 'Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy'; again v. 12: 'They shall be rewarded in heaven who suffer persecution for his sake'. And what is more, in the end of the 6th chapter, v. 46: "If you love those who love you, what reward will you have?" And in the 6th chapter, v. 4, of almsgiving, fasting and praying: "Your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you publicly". From what passages do the unintelligent, false pastors conclude that one enters the kingdom of heaven and is saved by our works and deeds, and they build their foundations, monasteries, pilgrimages, masses, etc., on this basis. — Although this question is a little sharp and belongs more to the school of scholars than to the sermon chair for the simple, common man, nevertheless, because it occurs so often in the text, we do not have to pass it over and say something about it. For it is necessary that every man should know a little difference between grace and merit. For the two do not go together. Where grace is preached, merit cannot be preached; and what is grace cannot be merit, otherwise grace would not be grace, says St. Paul Rom. 11:6. There is no doubt about it. Therefore he that mixeth the two together maketh men to err, and deceiveth both himself and them that hear him. ... Therefore let us hold fast our doctrine, that we leave no work anywhere to come to the matters of obtaining God's favor and grace, of being delivered from sins, and of entering into the kingdom of heaven. In short, my merit should be nothing. And if it is needed for this purpose, I should only trample it underfoot and condemn it to hell as a sorrowful devil, as this would hinder my faith and deny Christ. ... But what sayest thou to this, that so many passages are of reward and merit? To this we say now, for the simple, that they are all comforts for Christians. For if you have become a Christian and have a merciful God and forgiveness of sins, both of which are past, and which are still in you daily, it will certainly be so that you will have to do and suffer much for the sake of faith and your baptism. For the wicked devil, together with the world and the flesh, will cling to you and torment you everywhere, as he has shown enough in these three

chapters to make the world too narrow for you. He showed us enough in the first chapter that the world would become too narrow for you. If he leaves us stuck in it without word and comfort, we should despair and say: Who wants to be a Christian, preach and do good works? For we see how they are, and how the world tramples them under foot, blasphemes and defiles them, shows all shrewdness and deceitfulness, and finally takes away their honor, body and goods; and he calls me to be no other than poor, sorrowful, hungry, meek, peaceful, suffering and persecuted; shall it then last forever and not even change? — Then he must go forth and comfort and strengthen me, saying, Ye are now in grace, and the children of God: though ye suffer these things in the world, be not dismayed; but stand fast, and be not weary, nor let any thing come upon you, but do every man whatsoever he shall do: though he suffer these things, they shall not hurt him: and know that the kingdom of heaven is his, and that he shall be richly rewarded. How will he be paid? We have it before, through Christ, without and before all our doing. So, as St. Paul says, God wants to make a great, clear star out of you and give you a special gift, even in this life. For even here on earth a Christian can gain so much from God through his prayer and good works that he can save a whole country, take away wars, dear times, pestilence, etc. ... Not that his work will make him a great, bright star and give him a special gift, even in this life. ... Not that the work is so precious because of its dignity, but because he has promised it to us for strength and comfort, so that we do not think that our work, plague and misery are lost and forgotten. ... Hence the fine passages and admonitions, such as Hebr. 10:35: *Magnum habetis renumerationem etc.*, 'Let not your confidence fail you, which hath great reward'. And Christ Matt. 19:29: 'There is no one who leaves house or brethren or sister or father or mother or wife or child, who does not receive again a hundredfold now in this time, and in the world to come, eternal life' etc. So he also speaks here: *Merces vestra magna est in coelo*, 'It shall be well rewarded you in heaven'. So that he shows that they already have the kingdom of heaven and yet shall have it all the more gloriously when it is now revealed. ... Now therefore learn to answer such passages, where it stands of merit and reward: I hear well that Christ saith: 'Blessed are the poor, for they shall receive the

Kingdom of Heaven' and: 'Blessed are you, if for my sake you suffer persecution, for your reward is great in heaven' etc. But with this he does not teach me the foundation of my salvation, but gives me a promise of what comfort I shall have from it in my suffering and Christian life. You do not have to make a mixture for me and brew the two together, nor do you have to make my merit from that which God gives me in Christ, through baptism and the gospel. For it does not stand here that I can earn these things, nor that I may add to them Christ's baptism, but that those who are Christ's disciples, to whom he preached here, and who must suffer all things for his sake, know what they must comfort themselves with, because they will not suffer on earth, that they may have all things the more abundantly in heaven. For although, as I have said, in Christ all things are equal, and grace gives one to another, and brings to each one all salvation, as the highest and most common good, that he who has Christ certainly has all things, yet there will be a difference of clarity and glory, so that we may be adorned and shine. Just as now there is a difference of gifts, that one labors and suffers more than another; but in that life all will be made manifest, so that all the world will see what each has done, and will have the greater glory, which the whole heavenly host will rejoice in. That is enough of that for now. God keep us in his grace, shown in Christ! Amen." ²⁴⁹⁾

11. The great value of good works. ^

Good works have no value in obtaining forgiveness of sins and salvation, because they are completely disregarded in the attainment of these goods.²⁵⁰⁾ When this truth, which is the characteristic of Christian doctrine, became known again through Luther's ministry, pseudo-reformers wanted to surpass the reformer and spoke as if the good works of Christians had no value at all. Luther opposes this and puts, from the Scriptures, the great value of

249) About the reward of good works: Quenstedt II, 1419 sqq.; Chemnitz, *Examen, De bonis opp.*, 4. *quaestio, de praemiis et meritis b. o.*, p. 185 sqq.

250) Rom. 3:28; Eph. 2:8-9: *χωρίς ἔργων νόμον*.

Christian works into the light. He says that "outside the article of justification" no one can sufficiently praise good works.²⁵¹⁾ Luther writes²⁵²⁾ against Anabaptists of his time: " Behold, how finely they teach of good works, speaking, they give their good works for a penny. With this they want to be our monkeys and teach us, because they have heard that we teach that good works do not make one pious, do not wipe out sin, and do not reconcile God. The devil adds to this and despises good works so much that he wants to sell them all for a penny. I praise God, my Lord, that the devil, in his subtle wisdom, has to so shamefully abuse and deceive himself. We teach, then, that God's reconciling, pious making, and sin-canceling is such a high, great, and glorious work that Christ, God's Son, alone must do it, and is actually a pure, simple, and special work of the one right God and His grace, to which our works are nothing, nor are they able. But that therefore good works should be nothing fine or worth a penny, who ever taught it or heard it without now from the lying mouth of the devil? I would give one of my sermons, one of my lessons, one of my writings, one of my Our Fathers, yes, however small works I have always done or still do, not for the whole world's goods; yes, I hold it dearer than my body's life, which is and should be dearer to everyone than the whole world; for if it is a good work, God has done it through me and in me. If God has done it, and if it is God's work, what is the whole world against God and his work? Even if I do not become godly through such works — for that must first come about through Christ's blood and grace without works — it is nevertheless done for God's praise and honor, for the neighbor's benefit and salvation, none of which can be paid for or compared with the world's good. And this fine rabble takes a penny for it! Oh, how finely the devil has hidden himself here! Who could not seize him here?"

Luther's hymn on the value of good works is perfectly scriptural. Here it is only necessary to summarize what has already been

251) To Gal. 3:22. St. L. IX, 442 f. Erl., lat., II, 100: *Extra causam iustificationis nemo potest bona opera a Deo praecepta satis magnifice commendare. Quis enim vel unius operis, quod Christianus ex fide et in fide facit, utilitatem et fructum satis praedicare potest? Est enim pretiosius quam coelum et terra.* [[Google](#)]

252) St. L. XIV, 310 f.

explained in detail in other sections. First, good works have great value because they are done according to the norm of the divine will. As all works that are not done according to the will of God are worthless, so all works that go along in the will of God, the supreme Lord, are great and precious.²⁵³⁾ Furthermore, good works have such great value because, seen in terms of *causa efficiens*, they are God's effect. It is true that the Christian is the subject of the works, and he cooperates (*cooperatur*) with them according to the new man. But this cooperation is God's effect, not coordinated, but so completely subordinated that the Christian does good only insofar and as long as God works it in him and through him.²⁵⁴⁾ That is why the Scriptures also expressly call the works of Christians God's works and effect.²⁵⁵⁾ Who, however, would want to minimize that which is the effect of the great God? It must not be objected that Luther calls works, which are mixed into the article of justification, trampling underfoot and blasphemy.²⁵⁶⁾ Works, insofar as they are mixed into the article of justification, are not God's but the flesh's and the devil's works, which is why Paul also puts a curse on the teachers of such works.²⁵⁷⁾ Good works also have great value because they are *testimonia Spiritus Sancti externa* for all Christians for their state of grace.²⁵⁸⁾ This too is scriptural, addressed, when it is said of good works that they are worth more than heaven and earth. For heaven and earth pass away, but the good works of Christians remain. What the Christians possess in earthly goods also burns up in the fire of the Last Day: but their good works, even those which they have done with their perishable earthly goods, do not burn up, but follow them into eternity²⁵⁹⁾ and are crowned with an eternal reward of grace.²⁶⁰⁾ Yes, for the sake of the works of Christians, among which the sermon of the Gospel is the noblest, the world still stands at all.²⁶¹⁾ Therefore, Christians are exhorted to use the short time of earthly life to do good works,²⁶²⁾ and pastors are instructed to do so,

253) p. 44. 254) p. 15.

255) Phil. 2:13; 2 Cor. 3:5; 1 Cor. 12:6-11; Eph. 2:10.

256) St. L. IX, 245. 257) Gal. 1:8. 258) Luke 7:47; 1 Joh. 3:14..

259) Rev. 14:13. 260) Matt. 5:12; 19:29; 10:42; Gal. 6:9.

261) Matt. 24:14; 1 Pet. 2:9.


262) Gal. 6, 10; Eph, 5:16; Col. 4:5.

to teach good doctrines with all diligence.²⁶³⁾ Good works are the ultimate purpose of the Christian's life in this world. Once a man has come to believe in Christ, he no longer belongs to this world. His real home is in heaven.²⁶⁴⁾ But God leaves him still in this world, so that he may serve him in his kingdom, especially for the sermon of the gospel in the world.

12. The Papacy and good works. ^

As is well known, the papacy presents itself before the church and the world²⁶⁵⁾ as the great protector of sanctification and good works.²⁶⁶⁾ The Roman polemic against the Reformation always comes to the point that "sanctification and good works would be dismissed" by the church's doctrine of grace of the Reformation. So of more recent papists also Möhler²⁶⁷⁾ and Gibbons.²⁶⁸⁾ Already in the Imperial Edict of Worms of 1521 it says: Luther "teaches a free, self-willed life, which is excluded from all laws and completely bestial".²⁶⁹⁾ Luther remarks: "Shameful it is that emperors and princes publicly deal in lies."²⁷⁰⁾ It is not Luther with his biblical doctrine of grace, but the sect of the Pope with his doctrine of works that is dismissing good works. The factual situation is this: By interdicting the Christian doctrine of justification,²⁷¹⁾ the papacy *eo ipso* also banishes good works, because good works in any case come into existence only as a consequence and effect of justification by faith without works of the law.²⁷²⁾ If there are still individual souls under the papacy, in whom sanctification and good works are actually found, then these are the people who believe the gospel of the forgiveness of sins without works of the law, against the prohibition of the "church".²⁷³⁾

263) Tit. 3:8, 14; 1 Tim. 6:17 ff. 264) Phil. 3:20; Joh. 5:24.

265) Also before the world, and with success, *quia homines naturaliter ita iudicant Deum per opera placandum esse. Nec videt ratio aliam iustitiam quam iustitiam legis civiliter intellectae*. (Apol. 151, 272. [[Trigl. 225, III, 273](#) ])

266) Cf. Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore in [The Faith of Our Fathers, chap. III, p. 35 ff.](#)

267) Symbolik 5, p. 208 ff. 268) [A. a. O., S. 49.](#)

269) Published of Edict. [St. L. XV, 2274 ff. 2281.](#)

270) [St. L. XV, 2275.](#)

271) Tridentinum. sess. VI. can. 11. 12.

272) Rom. 12:1; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 7:5. 6; 6, 40; 8:3. 4.

273) Apol. 151, 269-271. [[Trigl. 225, Apol., III, 269- 271](#) ]

If we compare the "good works" done according to the official recipe of the papacy with the Christian good works, we get the following result: First, the works of the Christians are in any case thank-offerings for the forgiveness of sins already obtained through faith. The Papacy, on the other hand, means doing works to earn grace through the works de congruo and de condigno, as if God had not been in Christ and reconciled the world to Himself.²⁷⁴⁾ Therefore, the works which the Roman Church teaches and calls "good works" are a denial and blasphemy of the redemptive work of Christ; "for if by the law comes righteousness, Christ died in vain" (ὁρπεάν ἀνεθάψεν).²⁷⁵⁾ Therefore, the Apostle Paul, who cares that Christ did not die in vain, pronounces the curse on all who teach "good works" according to the prescription of the papal church,²⁷⁶⁾ and judges all who do good works according to this instruction that they do not have God's pleasure, but are under the curse.²⁷⁷⁾ In short, as the Roman Church officially dismisses the Gospel and the Christian faith, so it officially dismisses good works and the Christian life. When Cardinal Gibbons portrays the Roman Church, with its doctrine of works, as "a society ... for the *sanctification* of its members,"²⁷⁸⁾ he proves that all his thoughts on sanctification and good works are situated outside Christianity. Gibbons does not know that sanctification and good works come only from faith in the gospel. Scripturally, Luther thus judges of the Roman "good works": "The works which are done apart from faith" (namely, apart from the belief that we have received grace for Christ's sake alone), "however holy they may look according to outward appearance, are under sin and the curse. Therefore, far from those who do them being deserving of grace, righteousness, and eternal life, they rather heap sin upon sin. In this way, the pope does works, the man of sin and the child of perdition, and all who follow him. In such a way also do all works-saints and the heretics who have fallen from the faith." ²⁷⁹⁾ It therefore stands thus: The

274) 2 Cor. 5:19; 1 John 2:2; 4:10. 275) Gal. 2:21.

276) Gal. 1:6-9; 5:12. 277) Gal. 3:10.

278) The *Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 35 [p. 33]. 279) St. L. IX, 443.

Papacy and its genuine members, because of the rejection of the Gospel, are in principle not designed for good works, but always for evil works. You cannot draw water after blocking the spring. Likewise, one cannot reject the gospel and yet still do good works. Of all works that men do, "worthless if detached" applies, namely, if the works are detached from faith in the gospel. Then: where faith in the gospel does not dwell in the heart, the devil has his work,²⁸⁰⁾ and he is constantly driving to evil works. Therefore, we also see the following works in the papacy and its true members: Instead of praising the gospel, they curse it;²⁸¹⁾ instead of hearing and honoring the teachers and confessors of the gospel, as the Word of God demands,²⁸²⁾ they disgrace them as apostates and heretics,²⁸³⁾ and where they have the power to do so, they also persecute the gospel and its confessors with external violence.²⁸⁴⁾

280) Eph. 2:2. 281) Tridentinum. Sess. VI, *can.* 11. 12. 20.

282) Luke 10:16; Joh 13:20; Phil 2:29.

283) In the Edict of Worms, Luther is called "not a man," but "the evil enemy in the form of a man with an assumed monk's habit" (St. L. XV, 2282), and in the Bull of Excommunication, "a wild pig from the forest and a particularly wild animal" (St. L. XV, 1427). Luther's "memory" was to be "completely eradicated from the society of believers in Christ" (loc. cit., 1452).


284) In the Bull of Excommunication Leo X "commands". "to all and every prince, king, emperor, elector, duke, margrave, count, baron, captain, captains, nobles, communes, universities, powers, cities, lands, castles, and regions, or their inhabitants and citizens, and to all and every obedient person throughout the world, ... that they or any of them at all and every pleas personally saw and caught Martin, his assistants, supporters, keepers and favorers, until our request and send them to us. On the other hand, they should receive a worthy reward and retribution from us and the Apostolic See for such a good work". (op. cit., 1453 f.) In the Edict, Charles V commands "all and every one in particular, in the duties that you owe to us and to the holy kingdom," "that you all and in particular . . do not house, court, etch, water, or abstain from the reported Martin Luther, nor show him any help, support, assistance, or encouragement, either secretly or publicly, either by word or deed, but rather, where you may arrive and enter him and be able to do so, accept him in custody and send him to us well preserved ... and you will receive quite a bit of pleasure for such a holy work, even at your effort and expense". (op. cit., 2286.) Luther

Secondly: Seen in terms of the norm, the works commanded by the Papacy also fall outside the framework of good works. According to Scripture, the predicate "good" belongs only to the works that God has commanded. The papacy, however, expressly obliges Christians not only to God's commandments, but also to the commandments of the church, that is, to human commandments.²⁸⁵⁾ Therefore, it is precisely the peculiarly Roman "good works" that fall under the judgment of Christ: "In vain do they serve me, because they teach such doctrines as are nothing but the commandments of men."²⁸⁶⁾ It is a factual judgment when it has been said that by the flood of papist commandments of men²⁸⁷⁾ the whole Christian life is turned into a caricature. According to the Scriptures, the life of Christians is thus shaped so that they sing and play to God in their hearts because of the grace obtained through faith in the gospel²⁸⁸⁾ and then serve God cheerfully in the works that their position on earth entails, whether in the church or in the state

makes the remark about the "holy work": "Behold, the murderers called people strangle a holy work!" For further characterization of the Roman piety Luther says: "The Turk is ten times wiser and more pious than our princes are. ... I lament this from the bottom of my heart to all pious Christians, that they take pity with me on such mad, foolish, nonsensical, raving, insane fools. Would that one were ten times better dead than to hear such blasphemy and reproach of divine majesty; yea, it is the deserved reward that they persecute the Word of God, therefore they shall be punished with such grasping blindness and tarnish." (*op. cit.*, 2296.) The pope demands such "good works" from princes and countries even today. Leo XIII's Circular Letter (*Immortale Dei*) of November 1, 1885, also inculcates in the United States the duty to place itself at the service of the Papal Church and to suppress all other "worships" as soon as they have the power to do so. Cf. the article "The Pope's Latest Encyclical" in *L. u. W.* 1886, p. 12 ff. — Cardinal Gibbons joins those who also persecute Luther's person with invective when in *The Faith of Our Fathers* (p. 49 [p. 47]) he assigns Luther a place among the pseudo-reformers whose "private lives were stained by cruelty, rapine, and licentiousness." To such "sanctification of its members" it urges Rome after rejection of the Christian doctrine of justification.

285) Tridentine. *Sess. VI, can. 20*: *Si quis hominem iustificatum ... dixerit non teneri ad observantiam mandatorum Dei et ecclesiae ... anathema sit.* Likewise *sess. VII, can. 8*.

286) Matt. 15. 9.

287) which are a natural consequence of the rejection of the gospel. The Apology 122, 87 [*Trigl.* 177, III, 87 ]: "No works can put a conscience to rest, therefore new works are always devised without God's commandments."

288) Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.

and in social life.²⁸⁹⁾ On the other hand, a Roman-directed life is like this: after Rome has eliminated the gospel of God's grace in Christ by anathema, it instructs souls to seek and earn grace and salvation through their own holiness and works.²⁹⁰⁾ The majority of those entrusted to his care are placed on the "second board" (*secunda tabula*) of the penance he invented (*contritio cordis, confessio oris, satisfactio operis*),²⁹¹⁾ also sent on journeys to Rome, Lourdes and other "places of grace".²⁹²⁾ An elite is placed in the monastery to earn salvation for themselves by following the also invented *consilia evangelica* and to be able to give a surplus of good works (*opera supererogationis*) to others. But because the whole procedure is not reliable,²⁹³⁾ , purgatory is offered for the perfected "sanctification".²⁹⁴⁾ In sum: As Rome's doctrine of justification is the opposite of the Christian doctrine, so is a life directed by Rome the exact opposite of the Christian life drawn in the Scriptures.

The climax of the Roman inversion of sanctification and good works is found in the Jesuit Order. In this order, the rule is that even sins cease to be sins and become good works in the eminent sense when the superior of the order commands the sins and the members of the order perform them in dutiful obedience. The words read in the *Institutum* of the Order.²⁹⁵⁾ " It hath seemed good in the Lord, ... that no constitution, declaration, or any rule of life, should involve the obligation of mortal or venial sin,

289) Rom. 15:16; 1 Cor. 7:20 ff; Col. 3:23, 24; Eph. 6:7; 1 Tim. 2:15. Here we must again recall Luther's classic description of a Christian life in the various stands on earth, St. L. IX, 952 ff. "If the Christian is a servant, he is cheerful and of good cheer; when he goes into the wood, rides in the field, he sings."

290) Tridentinum. *sess. VI, can. 32.*

291) Tridentinum. *sess. VI, can. 14.* cf. Luther XIX, 54 f.; XI, 720 f.

292) Cf. Luther on the "lying, shameful folly of the devil, which they [the Romans] have practiced with the sanctuary and pilgrimages". (St. L. XVI, 1661.)

293) Tridentinum. *sess. VI, can. 14. 9.*

294) Tridentinum. *sess. VI, can. 30.* Cf. Luther on the "blasphemous deceit of the purgatory, so that they also treacherously fooled and falsely frightened all the world." (St. L. XVI, 1653 f.)

295) *Institutum societatis Iesu, auctoritate congregationis generalis 18. auctum et recusum. Pragae 1757. vol. I, p. 414 sq.*

unless the Superior should enjoin it in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, or in virtue of obedience, which may be done in those things or persons where it shall be judged what is most conducive to the particular benefit of each, or to the general benefit: and that the fear of offence may be replaced by love and desire for all perfection, and that a greater honor and praise of Christ our Creator and Lord may be the result." ²⁹⁶⁾ In the *Index generalis* this is summarized thus: "Superiors can oblige to sin by virtue of obedience, if this brings great benefit." ²⁹⁷⁾ Incidentally, Jesuitism, in requiring its religionists to renounce their own consciences, sets no novelty in the organism of the papacy. By denying to the rest of humanity its own judgment in matters of doctrine and life, and by requiring of it the sacrificium intellectus et voluntatis, ²⁹⁸⁾ the pope thereby demands of every human individual the renunciation of his own conscience, and thus the renunciation of that by which man differs from the animal. It has been rightly said of the papacy that it represents a "dehumanization of humanity". Through the Reformation, the right to be a man has been claimed for mankind. Luther calls for a referendum to the conscience of the individual in all matters of right and wrong. Matters of Christian doctrine and morals are decided by the individual Christian according to God's revealed Word. ²⁹⁹⁾ The

296) *Visum est nobis in Domino ... nullas constitutiones, declarationes vel ordinem ullum vivendi posse obligationem ad peccatum mortale vel veniale inducere, nisi superior ea in nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi vel in virtute obedientiae iuberet: quod in rebus vel personis illis, in quibus iudicabitur, quod ad particulare uniuscuiusque vel ad universale bonum multum conveniet, fieri poterit: , et loco timoris offensae succedat amor et desiderium omnis perfectionis, et ut maior gloria et laus Christi, Creatoris ac Domini nostri, consequatur.* [Google]

297) A. a. O., Vol. II, *Index generalis, under bem 3dtet "Obedientiae et Obedire"*: *Superiores possunt obligare ad peccatum in virtute obedientiae, quando id multum conveniat. Par. 6, c. 5, p. 414. Cf. the article "Jesuitism" by Dr. Walther, Der Lutheraner 1853, p. 49 ff.*

298) Thus not only in the Declaration of Infallibility of 1870 (Baier I, 81), but already in the Tridentinum, sess. IV (Smets, p. 15) and wherever the judgment of doctrines is denied to the individual Christian. (Cf. Luther XIX, 341 ff.).

299) Luther explains this powerfully in 1 Pet. 3:15 (St. L. IX, 1235 ff.). He says, among other things: " See what St. Peter says here to all of us, that we should give

Things that lie in the realm of the state and civil life are judged by the individual according to the light of reason or the "natural law, of which all reason is full."³⁰⁰) It has been objected in favor of the Roman demand to renounce one's own judgment that God also demands the *sacrificium intellectus et voluntatis* and that Christians perform it, as is evident from 2 Cor. 10:5: "We take captive all reason under the obedience of Christ," *αἰχμαλωτίζοντες παν νόημα εἰς τὴν νπακοὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ*. Against this it is to be said that God and his word and the Pope and his word are quite different things and authorities. By placing his own Word next to God's Word and *eo ipso* above God's Word, the Pope acts as

give answer and show reason of our faith. If you die, I will not be with you, nor will the pope. If then you do not know the reason for your hope and say, "I believe as the councils, the Pope and our fathers believed," the devil will answer, "But what if they were mistaken? Therefore, we must know what we believe, namely, what is the Word of God, not what the Pope or councils put or say. For you must not trust in men, but in the Word of God alone. ... Therefore thou shalt say, What inquire I after what he or he believes or decides; if it be not the Word of God, I will not hear it. Yea, saith thou, it is a confounded thing about faith, that no man knoweth what to believe: therefore must we wait till it be determined what we shall believe. Answer: In the meantime you will also go to the devil. For when the time comes for you to die and you do not know what to believe, neither I nor anyone else can help you. Therefore thou must know thyself, and turn to no man, and stand fast by the Word of God, if thou wilt escape the devil and hell."

300) According to this, the individual must also carefully examine whether, for example, a war is justified or not. (Cf. Luther, St. L. X, 413 ff. 524 ff.) Whether a war is justified or unjust can neither be decided by the state (secular authorities) nor by the church (pastor, synod) nor by any man for the conscience of the individual. That is why Luther inculcates to investigate the situation not just above, but "by possible diligence". This is, of course, also the meaning of the 16th article of the Augustana, where among the functions of the authorities the "waging of right wars" is mentioned. The limitation applies not only to the commandment of the authorities, but also to the obedience of the subjects, as is expressly noted at the end of the article. Likewise, Luther teaches in the above-mentioned passages. Only where, after diligent examination, one's own judgment is impossible, that is, where uncertainty remains as the result of the examination, should, in Luther's opinion, the Christian, if forced into military service, "not weaken certain obedience [to the authorities] for the sake of uncertain rights."

Antichrist. Then, as Luther reminds us, God deals with man in a completely different way than the Pope. God demands that man submit his mind and will to God, but God does it in such a way that through the Holy Spirit, who is active in His Word, He enlightens man's intellect and changes man's will in such a way that *ex nolente volens* becomes. In other words, God enlightens and corrects the natural conscience, the pope suppresses it. — It has been further objected that the suppression of the natural conscience is not a speciality of the papacy and Jesuitism, but is found everywhere in the world, where in business interest, party interest or in other subjective interests the difference between good and evil is practically abolished. That is correct. But this is only a proof of the fact that in the papacy we have a *confluxus* of all heresies and ungodliness that are found in church and world. Then there is a difference between the godlessness of the world and the godlessness of Rome. The world openly pronounces its apostasy from God when it says that the difference between good and evil is not to be observed in the interest of business, family, state, party, association, etc. Rome, on the other hand, covers its godlessness with the name of Christ and the Christian Church.

13. Modern protestant theology and good works. [^]

Thieme reports,³⁰¹⁾ that the Lutheran dogma that good works are not necessary for salvation has been mostly abandoned by the newer theology, even by the so-called positive trend. Rather, "the idea of moral religion that the fruit of faith is necessary for salvation" is almost universally accepted. This is unfortunately true. The newer Protestant theology deletes from its conceptual apparatus the *satisfactio vicaria* of Christ as too "juridical" and "material" and wants to "deepen" the "concept of atonement" so that "the transformation of the life of mankind into its God-appropriate form", i.e. sanctification and good works, are excluded from the atoning work of Christ as "co-founding for its value before God".³⁰²⁾ But this is, in substance, the Roman doctrine of the merit of good works for the attainment of salvation, and this agrees with the Council of Trent when the latter rejects the doctrine "as if the

301) RE.³ XXI, 120.

302) Kirn, Dogmatik, p. 118.

Gospel is a mere and unconditional promise of eternal life, without the condition of keeping the commandments.³⁰³⁾ But it is therefore also true that of the works which the newer Protestant theology teaches as necessary to salvation, the same is true what had to be said of the papist works: they do not belong to the category of good works, but they defile the perfect redemptive work of Christ and bring upon the teacher and doer God's condemnation judgment and curse.³⁰⁴⁾ Very correctly Max Müller [*sic*: Monier Monier-Williams] said in a lecture to the British Bible Society that the works which are not merely thank-offerings of faith, but are done for the purchase of salvation, belong to the realm of paganism.³⁰⁵⁾ One cannot teach both doctrines at the same time: good works and the necessity of good works for salvation. The latter cancels out the former. If a representative of the newer theology does good works, this can only be done in such a way that he first removes from his inner being his theory of the necessity of good works for salvation — modernly expressed: "the transformation of the life of mankind into its God-appropriate form" as Christ's work of reconciliation "co-establishing" its value before God — and lets the good works be only thank-offerings for the *sola fide* acquired grace and salvation.

14. The Christian life and the cross. ^

The old Lutheran teachers, such as Quenstedt and Calov, also include a section on the cross (*De cruce*) in their description of the Christian life.³⁰⁶⁾ This stands in harmony with the thoroughly practical tendency of their dogmatic expositions, and above all, it is in harmony with the Scriptures, which offer detailed teachings about the cross of the Christians. Although Christians stand in a completely ordered relationship to God through faith in Christ — God is not against but for them,³⁰⁷⁾ they are God's children and heirs of eternal life,³⁰⁸⁾ the angels serve them³⁰⁹⁾ etc. —, so God has nevertheless ordered

303) Tridentine. *Sess. VI, can. 20*.

304) Gal. 1:6-9; 5:12; Phil. 3:2; Gal. 3:10.

305) II, p. 2, note 8.

306) Quenstedt II, 1431 sqq.; Calov X, 703 sqq.

307) Rom. 8:31.

308) Joh. 1:12. 13; Gal. 3:26; Rom. 8:17.

309) Heb. 1:14.

that the high dignity of Christians in this life does not yet appear in the outer appearance, but on the contrary the Christian life on earth has the same lowliness which characterized Christ's life on earth.³¹⁰⁾ This lowliness of Christian life, in which Christians follow Christ and are conformed to him, is also called the cross of Christians in Scripture.³¹¹⁾ The following main points of the biblical doctrine of the cross are highlighted here:

1. What the cross comprehends in itself. Even the ungodly has much plague.³¹²⁾ But not of the ungodly, but only of the Christians the scripture calls suffering a cross.³¹³⁾ The cross comes

310) 1 Pet. 4:1: "Since therefore Christ in the flesh" (σαρκί, in earthly life) "suffered for us, arm yourselves also with the same mind." (Cf. Luther z. [St., St. L., IX, 1248.](#))

311) Luther says about the contrast between the high dignity of Christians and the humiliation of their life on earth: "We are already God's children here on earth and saved if we believe and are baptized, as Mark 16:16 stands written, and Joh. 1:12: .As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, who believe on his name." Baptism is seen; the children who are baptized are also seen; the gospel is heard; so we ourselves also feel in our hearts the testimony of the Holy Spirit that our faith, however weak it may be, is nevertheless righteous. But who sees us that we are God's children? Who wants to call such people God's children, who are thrown into dungeons and are so horribly tortured and tormented in all kinds of ways, as if they were children of the devil and vainly damned and cursed people? Therefore St. Paul does not say in vain that the glory of the children of God is still hidden, but it will be revealed in them, just as he also says in Col. 3:3-4: "Your life is hidden with Christ in God, but when Christ, your life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory." Furthermore, because they live on earth, they are not adorned with God's color, but with the color of the devil's sorrow. For it belongs to the children of the devil that they should be staked and bruised, and that all calamities should be put on them. But this does not happen, but they are in good health, rich, powerful, powerful, have honor. They have money and goods enough and use the color and name of our Lord God, as if they were well pleased with him. Again, they consider us heretics and enemies of God, so that there is a contradiction here: those who are God's children must be called the devil's children, and those who are the devil's children must be called God's children. This is painful to the pious; indeed, heaven and earth and all creation cries out and complains about it and is unwilling, that it should thus be subject to vanity and suffer that the ungodly abuse it against God's honor. ([St. L., XII, 729 f.](#))

312) Ps. 32:10; 34:22, 16, 4. Pharaoh, Ex. 2:7-11.

313) Cf. Luther, [St. L., XIII, 433 f.](#)

about Christians as Christians, namely in the practice of their Christian profession in the world.³¹⁴⁾ When they follow Christ in word and deed, especially when they confess the gospel of Christ crucified, who is an offence to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks, they receive from the world the same treatment that was Christ's part from earth. "If they have called the father of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they so call his household."³¹⁵⁾ To be sure, Christians are still sinners according to the flesh, and to that extent they deserve not only temporal suffering but also eternal damnation. But they recognize their sin and have daily forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ. Therefore, their suffering is not a punishment of sin in the proper sense, because the real punishment of sins is not this or that temporal misfortune, but eternal death. Also, as Luther reminds us, the factual situation is this:³¹⁶⁾ "The evil enemy and the world is not hostile to Christians because they are sinners, stumble and fall here and there. No, both the devil and the world would like to suffer and be satisfied with them, but for the sake of the Word and faith, that they place their hope in the Son of God, take comfort in His death and resurrection, fear God and desire to live according to His will; they desire that through their confession others may also come to faith and knowledge of Christ: neither the devil nor the world can suffer such things. For this reason Christians are afflicted everywhere; Satan afflicts them in the body with sickness, as St. Paul himself complains: Satan's angel beats him with fists and spears him, in the conscience and in the heart with sadness, gloom, terror and the like, yes, sometimes also with damage to property through weather, hail and fire, as is seen in Job. ... Therefore remember this: Do not deny that you are a poor sinner and that you deserve all misfortune. For God also rebukeeth sin in his own, as Peter saith: The judgment must begin

314) Luther: "A Christian, however, in that he is called a Christian, is thrown under the dear cross, that he must suffer either from people or from the devil himself, who both plagues and anguishes him with misery, persecution, poverty, sickness or inwardly in the heart with his poisonous arrows. This is called and is the Christians' lot and mark, a holy, dear, noble, blessed calling, which brings them to eternal life; to whom we must also do his right and take for good what he brings." (XII, 544 f.)

315) Matt. 10:25.

316) Luther XIII, 434 ff.

at the house of God.' Therefore, say, Satan and the world are not hostile to me. ... For what then is it to be done? For the man's sake" (namely, Christ's) "who here bears the cross, that I may believe and confess the same for my God and Savior." Therefore, in order not to be persecuted with the cross of Christ, the opponents of the apostle Paul preached the homogenized works doctrine to the world.³¹⁷⁾ In our time, too, one must let conversion and salvation depend not only on God's grace, but also on the "freedom left to man," on "self-setting," "self-determination," "right conduct," etc., if one does not want to be persecuted with the cross of Christ in the midst of Protestant Christendom. Now, because the Christians still have the flesh about them, which lusts against the Word of God,' will and order, and to which especially suffering is disagreeable, so the bearing of the cross of Christ includes the ἀπαρνέσθαι εαυτόν, the self-denial,³¹⁸⁾ namely, renunciation from everything that opposes following Christ,³¹⁹⁾ renunciation from one's own wisdom in spiritual things, from peace and tranquility,³²¹⁾ from honor among men,³²²⁾ from friendship with father and mother, son and daughter,³²³⁾ from earthly possessions,³²⁴⁾ from one's own life.³²⁵⁾ The cross further comprehends in itself the crucifixion of all lusts and desires that still stir in the flesh,³²⁶⁾ the killing of the members that are of the earth: Fornication, impurity, shameful affection, evil desire and avarice, which is idolatry.³²⁷⁾

2. The nexus indivulsus between Christianity and the cross. The cross is inseparably bound up with Christianity, so inseparably that anyone who refuses the cross must renounce being a Christian and sharing in the

317) Gal. 6:12.

318) Matt. 16:24: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, ἀπαρνῆσάσθω εαυτόν, and take up his cross, and follow me."

319) Luke 14:33: "Whoever does not renounce all that he has, οὐκ ἀποτάσσεται πάντα τοῖς εαυτὸν νύχρονσιν, cannot be my disciple."

320) Matt. 11:25-26. 321) Matt. 10:34; Luke 12:51.

322) Matt. 5:11; Luke 6:22; 1 Pet. 4:14.

323) Matt. 10:35-37; Luke 12:52-53.

324) 1 Cor. 7:30; Matt. 19:21-22.

325) Luke 14:26. 326) Gal 5:24.

327) Col. 3:5. Rom. 6:6: "We know that our old man was crucified with him, συνεσταυρώθη that the sinful body might cease, that we might not henceforth serve sin."

glory of Christ.³²⁸⁾ Luther: "He who is not a *crucianus*, that I may speak thus, is not a *christianus*; that is, he who does not bear his cross is not a Christian, for he is not conformed to his Master Christ."³²⁹⁾ Yet the Christian should not lay a cross on himself or others, but leave the laying of the cross to God,³³⁰⁾ because God alone knows what cross is good for the Christian, and because only God can give the strength necessary to carry the cross.³³¹⁾ Luther calls those who put on a cross themselves "works saints" and "martyrs of the devil."³³²⁾

3. The correct conception of the cross. Carrying the cross is difficult for Christians in the flesh. When they are treated badly here in the world, the thought arises in them that they do not deserve what is due to them as children of God and members of the body of Christ. The thought intensifies to the point that God does not care about them, that he is their enemy and no longer their Father.³³³⁾ In this erroneous view of the

328) Christ reminds the οἱ πολλοί who traveled with Him and followed Him, Luke 14:25-35. The inseparable binding between Christianity and the cross is pronounced Matt. 10:38-39; Mark. 8:34. 35; Luke 9:23-24, 57-62; Rom. 8:17 etc.

329) St. L. II, 467.

330) 1 Pet. 3:17: εἰ θέλει το θελημα του θεου; 1:6: εἰ δεον.

331) 1 Cor. 10:13.

332) On 1 Pet. 3:17 (St. L. IX, 1130): "It is to be noted that the apostle does not add in vain: 'Where it should be,' as he also does in the 3rd chapter, v. 17, where he speaks: 'It is best, if it be the will of God, that ye should suffer for a good thing.' For there are many people who put on their own cross without any need, as is the way of the works saints, walking, as St. Paul says, according to their own choice, in humility and spirituality of angels. The papacy has many such people. But it shall not be, for it is not God's will that thou choose for thyself a passion or a cross of thy own devotion or conceit; but if thou doest it, thou art the devil's martyr, not Christ's... But if it be so, that is, if God send thee, thou must suffer it for the confession of thy faith: accept it, and be comforted, that St. Peter here saith, that sorrow shall be for a little season, but that salvation, wherein thou shalt rejoice, shall be for ever." — Let us not forget to remember that no Christian should lay a cross on another in order to humble him in a wholesome way and thus lead him safely to heaven. That is to interfere with God, whose best privilege it is to put on a cross, and that is also to play freely with the salvation of one's neighbor, because we men do not know which cross is useful and bearable for our brethren.

333) Lamentations 5:20: "Why will you forget ours so completely?"; Ps. 13:2 etc. Job 30:21: "You are turned into a cruel one to me."

cross lies a great danger of apostasy to which many succumb.³³⁴⁾ Therefore, the Scriptures are eager to correct the erroneous conception of the cross. Above all, the teaching of Scripture is that the cross, even if it is at the same time a judgment on one's own sin, is not to be understood as a revelation of wrath, but rather as a revelation of love and as a sign of the existing relationship between children. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth; he chasteneth every son whom he receiveth."³³⁵⁾ When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, lest we be damned with the world.³³⁶⁾ The teaching of Scripture goes further: If Christians carry the cross because they confess Christ in word and deed, then in the cross there is a testimony of the Holy Spirit (*testimonium Spiritus Sancti externum*) that they do not belong to the world but to Christ, because they experience the same treatment from the world that was given to Christ and all witnesses of Christ.³³⁷⁾ Christians, according to the explicit instruction of Scripture, are to infer from the suffering of this time, by which they are being conformed to Christ, the eternal glory that is surely to come.³³⁸⁾ The designation of the cross as the "color of hope" for Christians is in accordance with Scripture.³³⁹⁾ Hence also the request to rejoice when

334) Luke 8:13: "At the time of apostasy they fall away."

335) Hebr. 12:6-10. 336) 1 Cor. 11:32.

337) 1 Pet. 4:14: "Blessed are ye, if ye be reproached for the name of Christ: for the Spirit of Christ, which is the Spirit of glory and of God, resteth upon you", ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἀναπαύεται. Matt. 5:12, "So they persecuted the prophets that were before you."

338) Rom. 8:17; 2 Thess. 1. 5-7; 2 Cor. 4:7. 8.

339) Luther describes the cross as "Christ's mark", which Christians do not have "painted on the wall", but "imprinted in their own flesh and blood": "If you want to be a fellow heir of the Lord Jesus Christ and not suffer with him and be his brethren and become like him, then he will certainly recognize you on the last day for no brother and fellow heir, but will ask you where you have your crown of thorns, your cross, nails and scourge. ... In the same way St. Paul speaks to the Galatians ch. 6:17: "Let me henceforth not be sworn to, neither tell me of the doctrine which is worthy of friendship on earth: for I bear in my body the mark of my Lord Jesus Christ. There he speaks of such marks, as one has painted the Lord Christ in the old paintings, that he has his cross on the armpit and beside it nails, crown of thorns and scourge. These signs, he says, I and all Christians must also have, not painted on the wall, but pressed into our flesh and blood. But this is what happens when the devil comes upon you and torments you inwardly with all kinds of

Christians, instead of being praised by the world and adorned with honors, reap revilings and blows.³⁴⁰⁾ This was the conception of the cross that the apostles had when they had been sacked at Jerusalem by the high counsel. The account says, "They went away rejoicing (χαίροντες, rejoicing) from the counsel's presence, that they had been worthy to suffer reproach for His name's sake."³⁴¹⁾ Likewise a little later. When Paul and Silas were in Philippi in the innermost prison, with their feet in the stocks, they praised God *μνονον τον θεόν*.³⁴²⁾ Scripture also counters the erroneous notion, as if God were mistaken in the heaviness of the cross, and laid upon the Christians more than they could bear. This view is excluded by the fact that the same gracious God who imposes the temptation also gives the happy outcome, *ποιήσει συν τω πειρασμώ και την εκβασιν του δύνασθαι υμάς νπενεγκειν*.³⁴³⁾

4. Purpose and use of the cross. According to Scripture, the cross is one of the ways and means by which God leads Christians through this world into eternal life,³⁴⁴⁾ by humbling them through the cross,³⁴⁵⁾ by teaching them to be content with grace,³⁴⁶⁾ thus exercising and strengthening faith,³⁴⁷⁾ by driving them to prayer,³⁴⁸⁾ by putting away the body of sin³⁴⁹⁾ and in general by turning their eyes from the visible, which passes away, to the invisible, which remains.³⁵⁰⁾ The Christian should also bear the cross patiently, so that he may be an example of patience for other Christians to imitate and encourage.³⁵¹⁾

terror and heartache, and then the world blasphemes you outwardly as a heretic and, where it can, grabs you by the neck and strangles you. These scars of the Lord Christ St. Paul hereby exhorts every Christian also to bear." (St. L. XII, 718 f.)

340) Matt. 5:12; Luke 6:23. 341) Acts 5:41.

342) Acts 16:25. 343) 1 Cor. 10:13. cf. Meyer on this passage.

344) Apost 14 22: *διὰ πολλών θλίψεων δεῖ ἡμας εἰσελθεῖν εἰς την βασιλειαν τον Θεοῦ* Furthermore, 2 Cor. 4:17: "Our tribulation, which is temporal and light, creates for us (*κατεργάζεται ημῖν*) an eternal and exceeding glory."

345) 2 Cor. 12:7: "Lest I exalt myself to high revelation, there is given me a thorn in the flesh, even the angel of Satan, which smiteth me with fists, lest I exalt myself."

346) 2 Cor. 12:8-9.

347) 1 Pet. 1:6-7. On this Luther IX, 1129 ff.

348) Ps. 18:7; Is. 26:16. 349) Rom. 6:6; 1 Pet. 4:1.

350) 2 Cor. 4:16-18.

351) Paul as an example of the cross bearers, 2 Cor. 1:6. The Thessalonians as an example of all believers, 1 Thess. 1:6-7: "You have become our followers (*μμηταί*).

Luther speaks to 1 Pet. 1:7 about the benefit of the temptations, especially about the increase of faith under the cross, as follows: "Here he shows in clear words the fruit and benefit of such temptations, which the believers both encounter from the tyrants and the rabbles, saying: They serve to prove the faith, to make it righteous and much more precious than the perishable gold that is tasted by fire. For just as fire does no harm to gold, nor does it consume it, nor does it make it less, but only benefits it, for it takes away all additions, so that it becomes quite pure and clean; so also the fire or heat of persecution and all kinds of temptation hurts well and hurts the old man to such an extent that those who have been exercised by it become sad and sometimes impatient, but faith becomes pure and clean through it, like gold or silver that has been refined. For the Christian life is done in such a way that it should always increase, become holier and purer. First, we come to faith through the sermon of the Gospel; but through faith we become justified and holy before God. But because we still live in the flesh, which is not without sin, the same are always stirring, drawing us back, and hindering us from being as fully holy and pure as we ought to be; Therefore God throws us into the midst of the fire of temptations, sufferings and tribulations, through which we are swept and tried to our end, so that not only sin is killed in us the longer the more, but also faith is proven and increases, so that we become more certain of our cause from day to day, increase in the understanding of divine wisdom and knowledge, so that the Scriptures become clearer and clearer to us, that we can admonish our own people with wholesome teaching and punish those who contradict us. If the devil had not attacked us so violently with power and cunning these years ago, we would never have reached this certainty in doctrine; nor would the article of Christian righteousness and the doctrine of faith have come to light so clearly. Therefore St. Paul says 1 Cor. 11:19: 'There must be heresies among you, that they which are righteous may be manifest among you.'" ³⁵²⁾

and of the Lord, and have excepted the word under many tribulations with joy in the Holy Spirit, so that you have become an example (rvro) to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia." Walther's reminder to pastors to be examples to the flock even as cross-bearers: *Pastorale*, p. 386.

352) On 1 Pet. 1:7. St. L. IX, 1131.

5. The power to carry the cross. Scripture derives this from the certainty of the forgiveness of sins and salvation. Only the one who has the love of God poured into his heart through the Holy Spirit, that is, the certainty that Christ died for us when we were sinners, can boast of the tribulations instead of perishing in them.³⁵³⁾ Only the one who is sure of the glory that will be revealed in him can despise the sufferings of this time.³⁵⁴⁾ The killing of the members who are on earth can only take place if we know through faith that our life is hidden with Christ in God.³⁵⁵⁾ Only he can rejoice and praise God under the hatred and persecution from the world, instead of being sad and lamenting, who is sure that his reward in heaven will be great.³⁵⁶⁾ Whoever, therefore, cancels the certainty of grace and salvation by making the attainment of grace and salvation dependent in any way on human works or moral achievements, does not, *eo ipso*, allow the power to arise by which alone the cross can be borne. Luther: "Because he [man] is not sure of eternal life and does not wait for the blessed hope, he cannot be satisfied nor have patience. As soon as things change and do not go his way, he becomes impatient and grumbles against God."³⁵⁷⁾ How, on the other hand, the certainty of eternal glory makes one capable of bearing the cross, Luther describes thus:³⁵⁸⁾ "See how he [Paul] turns his back on the world and turns his face toward the future revelation, as if he sees neither misfortune nor sorrow anywhere on earth, but only pure joy. Truly, if we are already in misery, he says, what is our suffering compared to the unspeakable joy and glory that shall be revealed in us? ... Whoever could put this into his heart would have to say: Even if he were burned and drowned ten times, if it were possible, it would be nothing compared to the glorious life to come; for what is suffering in time, as long as it lasts, compared to eternal life? ... Thus St. Paul makes of all suffering on earth a droplet and a little spark, but of that glory which we are to hope for an endless sea and a great fire. ... With the word that he calls it a glory

353) Rom. 5:5, 8. 354) Rom. 8:18. 355) Col. 3:3-5.

356) Matt. 5:12; Luke 6:22. 357) St. L. IX, 956.

358) On Rom. 8:18. St. L. XII, 717 ff.

that is to be revealed, he indicates what is lacking that one suffers so unwillingly, namely that faith is still weak and does not want to see into the hidden glory that is still to be revealed to us. For if it were a glory that one could see before one's eyes, ei, how should we be such fine, patient martyrs! If someone stood on the other side of the Elbe with a chest full of guilders and said, "Whoever dares to swim across, let him be the chest with the guilders," how should anyone rise up to swim for the sake of the guilders? How could anyone swim for the sake of the florins that would be seen before his eyes? Therefore saith St. Paul, I know assuredly that great glory is set before us, whereas all the sufferings of the earth are nothing: but it is lacking, because it is not yet manifest. If there were faith, it would be a small matter to us if such suffering lasted thirty, forty or even more years; indeed, we would consider it too small to be included in the reckoning, only that our Lord God would also keep his reckoning, which he has with us on account of our sins. Ah, what can one say about great suffering or the merit of suffering? How unworthily we come to such great grace and unspeakable glory, that through Christ we become children and heirs of God, brethren and joint heirs with Christ! Therefore we may well say: I will gladly keep silent about my suffering, not boast much about it nor cry out, but patiently bear all that my dear God sends and imposes on me and, moreover, thank him with all my heart that he has called me to such great, abundant goodness and grace. But, as I have said, it will not come to pass for the sake of our wretched weak flesh, which is more moved by the present than by the future. Therefore, the Holy Spirit must be the schoolmaster here and bring such comfort to the heart.³⁵⁹⁾

6 The cross and the sins of Christians. The question has been discussed in particular, whether the sins that still cling to the Christians are to be counted under the cross of the Christians. The question must be answered in the affirmative. Christians as Christians do not want these sins. By sinning, they do what they hate,³⁶⁰⁾ and they feel being sold under

359) Cf. Walther's admonition to pastors to keep their eyes fixed on eternal life, so that they will not grow weary under the cross. (*Pastorale*, p. 61 f.)

360) Rom. 7:15: ὁ μισῶ, τὸν το ποιῶ.

of the law of sin³⁶¹) as a painful captivity, as a misfortune that they suffer and from which they would like to be freed. Out of this situation the apostle's lament arises, "I wretched man, who will redeem me from the body of this death?" ³⁶²) Luther says: "The dear St. Paul draws the holy cross through all creation, so that heaven, earth and all that is in it may suffer with us [the Christians]. ... The creature must still be subjected with us to the tyrants who abuse our honor, body and goods according to their willfulness, as the devil abuses our soul. This is what we must suffer as those who are trapped on earth in the devil's kingdom. ... We pray and cry out with great groaning and longing in the Lord's Prayer: Help, dear Lord, that the blessed day of your glorious future may soon come, that we may be redeemed from the evil world, the devil's kingdom, and be freed from the terrible plague we must suffer from within and without, both from evil people and from our own conscience."³⁶³) . Keep on choking the old sack, that we may get another body, which is not so full of sin and inclined to all evil and disobedience as it is now, which may no longer be sick, suffer persecution and die, but which, redeemed from all misfortune bodily and spiritually, may become like your transfigured body, dear Lord Jesus Christ, and so we may finally come to our glorious redemption! Amen."³⁶⁴)

15. The Christian life and prayer. [^](#)

The nexus indivulsus between Christian life and prayer. After a man has become righteousness before God through faith and has entered into filial relationship with God, he begins to converse with God. This individual intercourse of the Christian

361) Rom. 7:14: πεπραμένος υπό την αμαρτίαν. V. 23: "I see another law in my members," αίχμαλωτίζοντά με τω νόμῳ της αμαρτίας πῶς ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσί μου.

362) Rom. 7:24: ταλαίπωρος ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος.

363) Even the sins that Christians do not want to commit register in their conscience as guilt, by which they deserve eternal damnation, and by which the devil wants to drive them to despair of God's grace. A 'Christian is always in anguish of conscience because of his sins, which is why he prays the fifth petition continually, not merely formally, but with inner desire. (Cf. Luther, [St. L. XV, 1551 ff.](#)).

364) [St. L. XII, 727, 728, 735.](#)

with God is referred to by the name prayer. The definition of prayer as "conversation of the heart with God" is scriptural.³⁶⁵⁾ The words of the mouth are not absolutely necessary for prayer,³⁶⁶⁾ but of course they are not excluded either.³⁶⁷⁾ Prayer, as a *consequence* of faith in the forgiveness of sins in Christ, is a *continuum*, namely the unceasing desire of the heart directed toward God, because the Holy Spirit, who has made his dwelling in the heart through faith and is the *causa efficiens* of prayer, does not behave as a dormant potency, but continually animates and moves the heart.³⁶⁸⁾ Therefore, the Christian prays even when, as is often the case in the direction of his earthly calling, he is not conscious of prayer, indeed even when he thinks he cannot pray because of suffering and woe.³⁶⁹⁾ Christians' prayer has been aptly compared to the pulse of natural life. Luther says: "Where there is a Christian, there is actually the Holy Spirit, who does nothing else but always pray. For even though he does not always stir the mouth or utter words, nevertheless the heart, like the arteries and the heart in the body, goes and beats without cessation with such groans: "Oh, dear Father, that your name may be hallowed, that your kingdom may come, that your will may be done for us and for everyone, etc.". And after that the punishments and temptations and hardships press and drive harder, after that also such sighing and pleading goes the stronger, also verbally. That no Christians can be found without prayer, as little as a living man without the pulse, which never stands still, stirs and beats for itself forever, although the man sleeps or does otherwise, so that he is not aware of it." ³⁷⁰⁾ — The division of the prayer into thanksgiving and petition is sufficient.³⁷¹⁾

365) Ps. 27:8. 366) Is. 65:24; Rom. 8:26-27.

367) Acts 7:59; 16:25; Luther IX, 923.

368) Rom. 8:14. 15: The Christians πνευματι θεου αγωνται. Luther (VIII, 361): "This is a restless spirit in the highest rest, that is, in God's grace and peace, that it cannot be quiet nor idle, but always strives and strives for it with all its strength, as one who lives solely for the purpose of bringing God's glory and praise further among the people."

369) Luther IX, 922. 370) To Joh. 14:13. 14. St. L., VIII, 363.

371) Luther (X, 2204): "We can no more act against God than in two ways, namely, with thanksgiving and petition. With thanksgiving we honor him for the goods and graces we have already received; with prayer we honor him for the goods and graces we would like to have henceforth." Also, intercession for all men and the authorities (1 Tim. 2:1-3; Jer. 29:7),

2 The preconditions of prayer. As a prerequisite of prayer on the part of the person praying, Schleiermacher's "paranoid sense of dependence" [*schlechthinniges Abhängigkeitsgefühl*] is not sufficient, nor is Ritschl's belief in divine providence.³⁷²⁾ The prerequisite for the wonderful fact that a man, who is earth and ashes³⁷³⁾ and in addition a sinner, speaks with the majestic and holy God, as a child speaks with the Father, is in any case, the faith, wrought by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, that God is gracious to him, the one who prays, for the sake of Christ's vicarious satisfaction, and both calls him to pray and promises an answer to his prayer. In other words, prayer always presupposes Christian faith in justification.³⁷⁵⁾ Only where there is faith in the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake is prayer a prayer "in the name of Christ," and only prayer in Christ's name has God's command and the promise of answer.³⁷⁶⁾ Also, only in this prayer is the joyfulness to pray present in the heart of man. Luther says on Joh. 14:13-14, "that apart from Christ no one is able to pray a letter that is valid and pleasing before God, as prayer is to all Turks, Jews, monks and hypocrites".³⁷⁷⁾ On the other hand, it has been argued that even those who know nothing of Christ's vicarious satisfaction, like the heathens, and even those who reject and fight against Christ's vicarious satisfaction, like the Unitarians, pray with earnestness, even "immersing themselves in God through contemplation". But all devotion and all prayer that does not flow from faith in the reconciliation that has come about through Christ lies in the realm of natural emotional and nervous excitation. The *causa efficiens* of such prayers is not the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit only transfigures Christ in His atoning work,³⁷⁸⁾ but the devil, who has his work in all unbelievers.³⁷⁹⁾ The Scripture expressly says: What the

for the believers (Eph. 6:18) and the unbelievers, also for the enemies (Matt. 5:44; Luke 23:34; Acts 7:59) etc. subordinates itself to the prayer.

372) Ritschl, Unterricht in der christlichen Religion, § 54.

373) Gen. 18:27.

374) Matt. 6:9.

375) Apol. 142, 212: *Nititur oratio misericordia Dei, quando credimus nos propter Christ pontificem exaudiri, sicut ipse ait: Quidquid petieritis Patrem in nomine meo, dabit vobis. In nomine meo, inquit, quia, sine hoc pontifice non possumus accedere ad Deum.* [Google]

376) Matt. 16:23; 14:13-14.

377) St. L. VIII, 362; IX, 922 f.

378) Joh. 16:14.

379) Eph. 2:2.

heathens sacrifice — and that is where their prayer belongs — they sacrifice to the devils and not to God.³⁸⁰⁾ It is true that Ritschl states the correct principle: "The invocation of God as our Father through Jesus Christ distinguishes the Christian religion from all others." But because Ritschl denies the very thing that distinguishes the Christian religion from all other religions, namely, the *satisfactio vicaria*, his religion also lacks the prerequisite for "the invocation of God as our Father through Jesus Christ." The objection that God can be thought merciful even without Christ's vicarious satisfaction is not valid. The feeling of guilt in the heart and conscience of man does not give way to human thinking, but only to the faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice wrought by the Holy Spirit, whereby the Holy Spirit writes the divine judgment of justification into the heart in place of the divine judgment of condemnation.³⁸¹⁾ Luther thus addresses the prerequisite of prayer: "Where the Spirit of grace is, he makes that we also can and may, indeed must, begin to pray. Therefore Christ wants to say here: If you believe in me and have received the Spirit, by which the heart is assured of the grace of God, of which he said above: If anyone sees me, he sees the Father also," it will certainly follow that you must also pray. For this is the right, proper and only work of Christians.³⁸²⁾ For before we become Christians and believe, we do not know what and how we should pray. And even though man prays most earnestly,³⁸³⁾ the spirit of grace is not there. For the heart is only like this: Dear Lord, you also wanted to see me live like this, suffer so much, or this and that saint's merit, pious people's

380) 1 Cor. 10:20. This is of course also true of Socrates' prayer, which we find mentioned in Xenophon (*Memorab.* I, 3, 2) and in Plato (*Phaedo*, at the end). Socrates' last word was: "We still owe a cock to Asclepius; sacrifice it yes and do not pass it by!" That just also in Socrates the devil *ὁ ἐνεργών* appears especially in his pride of virtue. Cf. the remarks of the great Socrates admirer Funke, *Real-Schullexikon* V, 374.

381) Incidentally, it is reported, as by Horace Bushnell, so also by Ritschl, that they returned to prayer on their deathbeds on the basis of *satisfactio vicaria*. Cf. II, 442 ff.


382) Augustine: *Si fides in Christ deficit, oratio perit*. In Quenstedt II, 1438.

383) namely, seen on the outward work, as with heathens, Romanists, Unitarians, etc.


intercession and good works. There is no faith in divine grace and mercy through Christ, and the heart always remains uncertain, so that it cannot conclude that it is certainly heard; only wants to act with God on his or other people's holiness, without Christ, as if God should humble himself before him and allow his grace or help to be wrested from him by ourselves, and thus become our guilty and servant, so that this is not called mercy, but deserves wrath, and is not prayed for, but rather mocked by God."³⁸⁴⁾ The uncertainty inherent in every prayer that does not flow from faith in Christ is also evidenced by the stammering speech of the heathen and the Romans, for they think they will be heard if they make many words.³⁸⁵⁾ — All the saints have prayed for Christ's righteousness or, which is the same thing, for God's grace and mercy in Christ, setting aside all their own worthiness.³⁸⁶⁾ So also now, until the Last Day, the joy of prayer comes to every individual only from the trust in the reconciliation made through Christ, and in view of the divine commandment and promise, setting aside his own worthiness or unworthiness.³⁸⁷⁾

3. Value and effect of the prayer of Christians. Since God sustains the world only for the sake of Christians, namely for the exercise of their Christian vocation³⁸⁸⁾ and the will of Christians expressed in their prayer coincides with the all-sustaining and governing will of God,³⁸⁹⁾ it is natural that Christians with their prayer *instrumentaliter* sustain and govern the whole world.

384) [VIII. 361 f.](#)

385) Matt. 6:7. Luther, Gr. Cat. 466; 25. [[Trigl. 705](#), [Large Cat.](#), [25](#) , [The Rosary of the Roman](#). The prayer wheels of the Tibetan Buddhists.

386) Dan. 9:18.

387) [Quenstedt](#) (II, 1438) reminds correctly: *Caveant precantes, ne in dubium vocent Dei potentiam, quasi iuvare non possit, licet velit, aut benevolum eius affectum, quasi nolit iuvare, licet possit, sed certo statuunt, Deum et posse et velle iuvare.* [[Google](#)] But without the *fides specialis, qua credit unusquisque* [each for his person] *sibi remitti peccata propter Christ et Deum placatum et propitium esse propter Christ* (Apol. 94, 45 [[Trigl. 133](#), [Apol.](#), [IV. 45](#) , [no one believes that the potentia Dei comes into effect for his sake and the benevolus Dei affectus applies to him.](#)

388) Matt. 24:14.

389) What the Christians ask, they ask κατά τό όέλημα αυτόν [“according to His will.”], 1 Joh. 5:14.

Everything that happens in the Church and the world is mediated through the prayer of Christians. The Scriptures go into detail here. That the Word of God has its course in the world despite the hostility of the world,³⁹⁰⁾ e.g. the apostle Paul finds an open door, speaks the address with joy,³⁹¹⁾ is saved from danger,³⁹²⁾ happens through the prayer of Christians. Through the prayer of the Christians also the existence and the well-being of the civil community,³⁹³⁾ the preservation and restoration of peace,³⁹⁴⁾ also the downfall of the bloodthirsty and false,³⁹⁴⁾ One must only not forget that according to the doctrines of Scripture the Christians do the same thing that Christ does, expressed more precisely, that Christ, what he works as *causa efficiens*, also does at the same time through the Christians as *causa instrumentalis*. Luther: "It is not necessary to separate the head and his members, that is, Christ and his apostles and the whole of Christendom. Every individual Christian is such a man as the Lord Christ himself was on earth, and does such great things that he can rule the whole world in divine matters, help and benefit everyone, and do the greatest works that are done on earth. For he is also more highly esteemed in the sight of God than the whole world, that God for his own sake gives to the world and preserves all that it has; that if there were not Christians on earth, neither city nor country would have peace; yea, in one day all that is on earth would be destroyed by the devil. But that grain still grows in the field and people recover, have their food, peace and protection, they have all this to thank the Christians for. We are poor beggars," says St. Paul in 2 Cor. 6:10, "but we make ourselves rich; we have nothing, but we have everything. And it is also true that what kings, princes, lords, civilians and peasants have in the world, they have not for the sake of their yellow hair, but for the sake of Christ and his Christians. ... Lords, citizens and peasants must have their land and people, power, honor and property for the sake of the Christians who live with them, even if they do not recognize it and give evil thanks for it. ... Therefore the Christians are pure helpers and saviors, even lords and gods of the world, as God also says to Moses in Exodus 7:1: 'I have set you as a god over Pharaoh.' Therefore

390) 2 Thess. 3:1.

391) Col. 4:2-4; Eph. 6:19-20.

392) Rom. 15:30-32.

393) Jer. 29:7.

394) 1 Tim. 2:1-3; Ps. 76:7.

395) Ps. 5:7, 11; 55:24.

Psalm 8 also says: "You have put everything under his feet," namely emperors, kings, princes, power, honor and property, even the cattle in the field, oxen, sheep, wild animals, birds in the sky and fish in the water. He also does not want to forget to show what the world has and is able to do, which they have on loan from the beggars, who have nothing and yet have everything, and everything that is given to the world by God, he gives for its sake, so that it is called all the works and miracles of the Christians, which they do until the Last Day, so that when they stop, God will also put an end to the world and burn everything with fire. ... The world only looks at what seems to be high and great, rich and mighty, and glorious and magnificent, and yet cannot see where they got it. But if you have been baptized, says Christ, and believe in me, you are the man who has and is able to do much more and greater things, even the works and greater things than I am doing now.³⁹⁶⁾ For I will make you lords, if you believe in me, that your works shall be counted for more and do more than any king or lord on earth; that ye may work and do what ye will, and with me help both to reign spiritually over souls unto salvation, and also bodily, by your prayers, to obtain and keep all things that are on earth, that they may take and have them all from you, and so enjoy your unknowing."³⁹⁷⁾

4. The object of Christian petition. To the question of what the Christian should and can ask for, the first answer is: for everything that is covered by the divine will and the divine promise. What God has commanded to ask and promised to give should be the object of our asking. Hence also the promise that Christians will obtain whatever they ask for. "All things (πάντα ὅσα) ye ask in prayer, if ye believe, ye shall receive."³⁹⁸⁾ We are not justified in restricting the πάντα ὅσα that Scripture so strongly emphasizes. But we must not forget that the will of Christians, in so far as they are Christians, quite coincides with God's will, and therefore they do not ask what occurs to them, but only that from God for which they have God's command and promise. Admittedly, in Christians, as long as they have the flesh about them, self-will still asserts itself. But insofar as

396) namely in the state of humiliation.

397) To Joh. 14., 12. St. L. VIII, 350-356.

398) Matt. 21:22; Mark. 12:24; Joh. 14:13-14; 16:23; Matt. 7:7-8.

this is the case, Christians *a priori* renounce the hearing of their request, because their prayer stands under the general rule: "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." Our congregational orders usually contain, in one form or another, the provision that from the outset every congregational decision should be invalid that stands in contradiction to the Word of God. In the same way, every Christian includes in his prayer *a priori* the provision that every prayer should be invalid if it asks for something that is not covered by God's will and therefore also not by God's promise. This fact is expressed in 1 John 6:14: "And this is the joy that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will (κατὰ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ), he hears us." Therefore it is quite correct when in the catechisms to the question, "For what and with what distinction shall we ask?" the answer is thus or similarly, "For the spiritual goods which are necessary to our salvation we should ask without condition, but for the other goods with the condition that God will give them to us if it is to His glory and to our salvation."³⁹⁹ This is true because the grace of God, that is, the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, is guaranteed in all circumstances by the divine promise and will. We see this from the divine answer, "Be content with my grace," when Paul asked three times in vain for the heavy cross to be taken down.⁴⁰⁰ There are, of course, cases in which Christians have asked unconditionally even in bodily matters, as Luther asked unconditionally for Melanchthon's life in 1540. Luther himself says: "There our Lord God had to serve me; for I threw the sack at his door and rubbed his ears with all his promises that he would hear prayer, which I knew to enumerate in the Holy Scriptures, that he would have to hear me where I should otherwise trust his promises."⁴⁰¹ But these cases belong to the field of *heroica* and do not fall under the general rule. They arise from the prayer life of individuals for special occasions, and it betrays an unspiritual audacity to deny them.⁴⁰² — Of the Lord's Prayer, because it is taught by

399) Brief exposition of the Kl. Katech. [St. Louis. Fr. 212](#) [Dietrich's Kl. Katech. St. Louis. Fr. 348. 349.](#)

400) 2 Cor. 12:9.

401) Köstlin, [Luthers Leben II, 515.](#)

402) Cf. Roos, Reformation History, Tübingen 1782, vol. II, p. 472, note. On the *fides heroica* in the healing of the physically possessed, cf. Walther,

Christ Himself, what Luther says in the Large Catechism applies: "We should also be attracted and drawn by the fact that God, in addition to the commandment and promise, comes first and Himself sets the word and way and takes it into our mouths how and what we should pray, so that we can see how heartily He takes care of our need and never doubt that such prayer is pleasing to Him and will certainly be heard, which is a great advantage over all other prayers that we ourselves might think up. For then the conscience would always stand in doubt and say: I have asked, but who knows how it pleases him, or whether I have taken the right measure and manner? Therefore no nobler prayer is to be found on earth than the daily Lord's Prayer, because it has such excellent testimony that God is glad to hear, for which we should not take the world's good." ⁴⁰³⁾ Prayers to the departed saints are folly, ⁴⁰⁴⁾ idolatry ⁴⁰⁵⁾ and blasphemy against the perfect merit of Christ and the perfectly gracious God for Christ's sake. ⁴⁰⁶⁾ Prayer to angels is also expressly forbidden in Scripture. ⁴⁰⁷⁾ This was further explained in the doctrines of God and of the angels. That divine honor is due to Christ even according to human nature because of the *unio personalis* was explained in the doctrine of Christ's person. ⁴⁰⁸⁾ — As far as "free prayer" ("prayer of the heart") and prayer in established form (form prayer) are concerned, it should not be said that free prayer in and of itself stands higher. ⁴⁰⁹⁾ Free prayer is also exposed to the abuse of "mechanical babbling" and battology [stammering speech], as experience in some revival meetings shows. ⁴¹⁰⁾ — What

Pastorale, p. 294. Quenstedt (II, 1439): *Extant exempla heroica imprecationum certorum quorundam hominum, divino zelo impulsorum, quae non sunt temere imitanda*. As an example, Quenstedt cites Elisha's prayer against the boys of Bethel, 2 Kings 2:23, 24.

403) M., p. 465 f. [[Trigl. 703](#), [Large Cat.](#), [Lord's Prayer](#), 22 f. ]

404) Is. 63:16; 1 Kings 8:39.

405) Matt. 4:10.

406) 1 Tim. 2:5. 6; Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1-2; Rom. 8:31. 32.

407) Rev. 19:10; 22:8-9. 408) II, 237 ff.

409) Nitzsch-Stephan, [Ev. Dogmatik](#), p. 131.

410) Whoever has time for public prayer and preparation should not forget careful preparation. Cf. [Dr. Walther's "Addresses and Prayers](#) in Congregational Meetings." St. Louis, Mo. publisher, Concordia. Published by the entire congregation after Walther's death. Those who read these prayers receive the impression that careful preparation has done no harm to the intimacy of the prayers. From American Reformed circles

of the gestures of prayer, Luther's reminder suffices: "There is no great power in standing, kneeling or falling down, for they are bodily ways, neither commanded nor forbidden, as necessary; just as others raise their heads and eyes to heaven, fold their hands, beat their breasts; only that they are not despised, because the Scriptures and Christ Himself praise them (Eph. 3:14; 1 Tim. 2:8; Jn. 17:1). On the other hand, it is not wrong to pray with the heart alone when one is tying sheaves in the field or lying on the bed."⁴¹¹

16. The Christian life, a life in expectation of the Last Day. ^

In his sermon on Christian hope⁴¹², Luther describes the Christian life on earth as a life lived in view of the Last Day. This description is quite scriptural. Just as the believers of the Old Testament

Hodge expresses himself thus: "Public prayer, it is often said, is the weak point in the Presbyterian Sabbath Service. This is probably true. That is, it is probably true that there are more good preachers than good prayers. The main reason for this is that the minister devotes a great part of the labor of the week to the preparation of his sermon, and not a thought to his prayers. It is no wonder, therefore, that the one should be better than the other." (Systematic Theology, III, 707.) Likewise, it is strongly recommended that the pastor, even in private pastoral care, e.g., when visiting the sick, the afflicted, etc., prepare himself for the prayer to be offered, if he is aware of the situation beforehand. It goes without saying that the pastor, by God's grace, should be able to pray doctrinally and edifyingly even *extempore*. The danger of "getting lost in generalities" can be avoided by transforming a scriptural word covering the case into a prayer. Experience teaches that aspiring pastors are not infrequently filled with trepidation about extempore prayers. The best preparation for praying *extempore* is for the students to lead a life of prayer already during their studies and to get used to talking to God about special events they encounter, be they of a joyful or sad nature, in a short prayer of praise or supplication. This can also be done during walks.

411) To Joh. 17:1. St. L. VIII, 748. Quenstedt (II, 1440 sq.): *Gestus etiam corporis in precibus adhibendus est, qui et divini numinis reverentiam, seriam veramque humiliationem coram Deo testetur et animi attentionem in sacro hoc exercitio iuvet.* [Google]

412) On Tit. 2:13: "We should wait for the blessed hope and appearance of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. This was a guest sermon Luther preached at Kemberg in August 1531 (St. L. IX, 930 ff. E. A 3 19, 328 ff.).

waited for the appearance of Christ in the flesh based on divine promises,⁴¹³⁾ so the believers of the New Testament are described as people waiting for the glorious appearance of Christ on the Last Day. Indeed, this is a characteristic of Christians not only at the end of their lives, but as soon as believers in Christ have come into possession of their eternal inheritance in heaven, their gaze is directed to the day when their Savior will visibly appear and take them with Him into eternal glory. The apostle writes to the Corinthians who have just become faithful, that they have no lack of any gift and only wait for the revelation of our Lord JESU Christ, ἀπεκδεχόμενοι την ἀποκάλυψιν του Κυρίου ημών Ἰησον Χριστον.⁴¹⁴⁾ Likewise Tit. 2:13: "We wait (προσδεχόμενοι) for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and of our Savior JESU Christ." Also Phil. 3:20: "Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we wait (ἀπεκδεχόμεθα) for the Savior JESU Christ." As αγαπητοί Θεοῦ, κλητοί ἅγιοι,⁴¹⁵⁾ επικαλούμενοι το δνομα Κυρίου⁴¹⁶⁾ is a designation of Christians, so also the ἀπεκδέχεσθαι and προσδέχεσθαι τον Κύριον etc. is a title of Christians. But Scripture does not leave it at this general characteristic, but places the whole Christian life, in all its activities and in its sufferings, in the light of the Last Day. Because they wait for their Lord, Christians are diligent in good works,⁴¹⁷⁾ especially in the sermon of the gospel,⁴¹⁸⁾ they keep themselves unspotted from the world,⁴¹⁹⁾ they guard against the security of the time of Noah,⁴²⁰⁾ they walk through this world as strangers and pilgrims, they use this world without abusing it,⁴²²⁾ they are mild because they leave the vengeance to the appearing Lord,⁴²³⁾ they resemble the wise virgins who have oil in their lamps,⁴²⁴⁾ they disregard the sufferings of this time,⁴²⁵⁾

413) The hymn of praise of Zechariah, Luke 1:67-79; of Simeon, Luke 2:29-32. The description of Simeon as προσδεγόμενος παράκλησιν τον Ισραήλ, v. 25, and of all believers in Israel as προσδεχόμενοι λύτρωσιν, v. 38.

414) 1 Cor. 1:7.

415) Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2.

416) Acts 9:14: 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:22; Acts 9:21.

417) Matt. 24:45 ff; 25:14 ff; Luke 12:15 ff.

418) Matt. 24:14.

419) Tit. 2:12-14. 420) Matt. 24:36 ff.

421) 1 Pet. 2:11; Hebr. 13:14. 422) 1 Cor. 7:31.

423) Phil. 4:5. 424) Matt. 25:1 ff. 425) Rom. 8:18.

so little that, instead of weeping, they even rejoice,⁴²⁶⁾ they are comforted in the midst of death.⁴²⁷⁾ Soon, inasmuch as Christians walk in the face of the Last Day, their lives take on the right shape, as it were, of their own accord.⁴²⁸⁾ Both individual Christians and pastors in particular should not forget this. It is true that Scripture also directs the gaze of Christians to a blessed death.⁴²⁹⁾ But primarily and ultimately every Christian life should be oriented by the view of the return of Christ.

Luther dealt with this subject *ex professo* in the above-mentioned sermon. We put some main thoughts here. Luther calls it the "Christian art and right masterpiece" to "turn one's back on this present life, as it passes away, and to always grasp that future life in the face, to hope firmly and surely for it, as it remains eternally, and into which we belong". "It is not in this world that we Christians citizenship, walk, and dwell, but in heaven is our citizenship, walk, and dwelling." But Luther also reminds us how difficult this article of faith is to put into practice: "Such things are rightly taught, but not soon learned; rightly preached, but not soon believed; finely exhorted, but not easily followed; well said, but badly done. ... Where we want to confess otherwise, we must confess ourselves, we seldom think that we must finally leave it and this life and send ourselves so that we would know where we wanted to stay. This is compounded by the stupidity that we are always afraid of death, mourning and trembling when things go badly for us. This is a sign that we do not wait for the blessed hope, as we should." But the learning of this article cannot be remitted to any Christian: "He who does not direct and send his heart to that imperishable life, and clings to this temporal, transitory life alone, does not understand what baptism, gospel, Christ, and faith are. We are not baptized into this life, nor are we called Christians because we are citizens, farmers,

426) Rom. 8:18; Luke 6:23; Matt. 5:12; 1 Pet. 4:12, 13.

427) 1 Thess. 4:13-18.

428) An example: the pastor, as a minister, knows that he often brings the vexed "dance and theater question," which admits of long theoretical discussions, to a conclusion in practice by a question like this: "In what place and company would you like to be found when your Savior appears?" [English ed.: See page 85, n. 141]

429) Phil. 1:21-23; Luke 23:43.

masters, servants, wives, maids, govern and allow ourselves to be governed, work and manage the household, but we are baptized for this purpose and this is why we hear the Gospel and believe in Christ that we all leave the same status (whether we have to live in it here on earth as long as God wants and serve God, each one as he is called by God) and leave this world into a different being and Life, since there is neither servant nor master, neither maid nor woman, neither female nor man, but since we are all equal and one in Christ Jesus, Gal. 3:28, how such equality here begins by faith, but there is accomplished by sight, 1 Cor. 15:53, that there will be no death, but life eternal and incorruptible, no sin, but righteousness and innocence, no fear, no sadness, but security and joy, no dominion, no authority, no power, but only God all in all; in sum, there is God and Christ himself together with all his chosen ones and saints. We were baptized into such eternal life, into which Christ redeemed us through his death and blood, and into which we received the gospel. As soon as a child is baptized and clothed in the chrisom, he is from that moment initiated into eternal life, so that from then on he is only a pilgrim and guest in this world for the rest of his life and so suits himself that he is ready to leave this temporal life and hope and wait always for that imperishable life."

The perseverance to salvation. ⁴³⁰⁾ ^

(*De perseverantia*)

[English ed.: p. 87 ff.]

The question of perseverance to salvation is very important.⁴³¹⁾ When Christ addresses the temptations and tribulations that will come upon believers, he adds: "He that persevereth unto the end shall be saved," ὁ ὑπομείνας εἰς τέλος, οὗτος σωθήσεται,⁴³²⁾ The tone is on the ὁ υπομείνας, as is also evident from the resumption of the subject by οὗτος — this and no other.⁴³³⁾ What the Scriptures teach concerning perseverance may be summed up in two propositions: 1. He who perseveres perseveres by the operation of God's grace alone; perseverance is a work of divine grace and omnipotence. 2. he who falls falls through his own fault; the cause of apostasy is always contempt for the divine Word and reluctance to accept the Holy Spirit's action in the Word. The Christian church has to hold this doctrine against two hostile fronts: Calvinism and Synergism.

The Calvinist doctrine of perseverance. ^

Consistent Calvinism teaches the unloseability of faith. It asserts very firmly that faith, once it has come into being, is not lost even through *peccata enormia*. Not faith itself, but only the exercise of

430) Chemnitz acts *De perseverantia* under *De iustificatione* (*Loci* 1599 II, 709) and *De bonis operibus* (I. c. III, 48 sqq.). Likewise Gerhard (*L. de iustif.*, § 83 sqq.; *L. de bonis operibus*, § 134 sqq.). In both places we have already spoken of perseverance, because it was to be shown that justifying faith, with the forgiveness of sins, is also certain of salvation (II, 485 f.), and that the preservation of salvation, or rather of faith, is not to be ascribed to good works (III, p. 22 ff.). Also after the doctrine of the means of grace and the church is a fitting place for the doctrine of perseverance. Next, in the doctrine of eternal election, *De perseverantia* must again be dealt with. Here we emphasize the points about perseverance in the faith that are to be held against Calvinism and Synergism.

431) Luther IX, 1807 [on Matt. 24:13].

432) Matt. 10:22. The same words are repeated by Christ Matt. 24:13.

433) Fritzsche on the passage: *Magna vi post ὁ δέ infertur οὗτος*.

faith (*exercitium fidei*) ceases in the case of gross sins.⁴³⁴⁾ This doctrine of perseverance is invented in order to eliminate the uncertainty that necessarily arises for the inquirer about grace because of the Calvinist denial of *gratia universalis*. Luther and the Lutheran Confession, as is well known, very firmly reject the doctrine of the infallibility of faith.⁴³⁵⁾ They are right to do so. It is an error that either drives to despair those who have actually lost faith and again ask for grace, or tempts them to believe in their former faith instead of in the grace of God in Christ. Cromwell's example has passed into church history. Strong says: "Cromwell on his death-bed questioned his chaplain as to the doctrine of *final perseverance*, and, on being assured that it was a certain truth, said: 'Then I am happy, for I am sure that I was once in a state of grace.'" Strong adds the criticism: "But reliance upon a *past* experience is like trusting in the value of life insurance upon which several years' premiums have been unpaid. If the policy has not lapsed, it is because of extreme grace." Strong would have treated a case such as Cromwell's thus: "The only conclusive evidence of perseverance is a present experience of Christ's presence and indwelling, corroborated by active service and purity of life." But Strong would also have been an evil advisor to Cromwell with this instruction. Cromwell would have answered him that he lacked just the present experience of Christ's indwelling and the confirmation of it by a holy life. Christ treated the thief on the cross, whose case was similar to Cromwell's, differently. He did not refer the inquirer about grace to "the present experience of the indwelling of Christ" and the confirmation of it by a holy life, but let him hear the objective word of grace. All analogous cases are to be treated in this way. There is, God be

434) The evidence from the *Canones Synodi Dordreclitanae* and the Confession of Faith is printed [II, note 1304](#). Calvin also denies the losability of faith, *Inst.* III. 2. 12: *Tenendum est, quantumvis exigua sit ac debilis in electis fides, quia tamen Spiritus Dei certa illis arrha est ac sigillum suae adoptionis, nunquam ex eorum cordibus deleri posse eius sculpturam.* [[Google](#)] Likewise Heidegger, *loc.* 24, *De constantia foederis gratiae*, in Baumgarten II, 636 sq.

435) Smalc. Art., p. 319 [[Trigl. 491, Part III, Art. III, 42 -44](#) [🔗](#)]; Augsb. Conf. art. XII [[Trigl 49, Art. XII](#) [🔗](#)]. Cf. [II, note 1305](#).

thanked, an objective, general and perfect grace of God. This grace is not based on the indwelling of Christ and on its confirmation by a holy life, but is present in God's heart for all men through Christ's substitutionary satisfaction, and is promised by God in the Word of the gospel to all whose ears the gospel comes to, so that it may be believed by all. This objectively existing grace, presented through the objective means of grace, not the "Christ in us" and holy life, is the saving grace, ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ σωτήριος. ["the grace of God that bringeth salvation"]⁴³⁶⁾ This grace, because it has appeared to all men (επεφάνη γὰρ ... πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις), is therefore to be witnessed also to the Cromwells and to all the secreters. Thus alone can faith, where it was lost, be produced again, for ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἀκοῆς ["faith cometh by hearing"]⁴³⁷⁾ Consistent Calvinism is incapable of this correct treatment of real (and supposed⁴³⁸⁾) apostates because of its denial of common grace. And the deficit cannot be covered by the Calvinist doctrine of perseverance, that is, by the doctrine of an unlosable faith. Rather, as said, this doctrine drives either to despair or to false confidence in former faith or one's own renewal and holy life. The situation in all cases is this: Without the general objective reconciliation effected by Christ and offered through the objective means of grace, one cannot rightly teach either of the origin of faith or of perseverance in faith, resp. of the return of apostates. Fortunately, many Calvinists, both pastors and hearers, forget *gratia particularis* in practice.⁴³⁹⁾

The synergistic persistence theory. ^

The synergists think they must teach that, as the origin of faith, so also the perseverance in faith depends not only on God's grace and effect, but also on man. What it is in man on which, apart from the effect of God's grace, perseverance still depends, is variously named, e.g. cessation of willful resistance, personal self-determination, right conduct, self- decision, moral activity in the new life, and so on. But among these different

436) Tit. 2:11.

438) Cf. [II, 534](#).

437) Rom. 10:17.

439) Cf. [II, 54](#).

expressions, the same thing is always meant, namely, that the factor on which the perseverance ultimately depends must necessarily be placed in man.⁴⁴⁰⁾ Otherwise, the argument continues, it would follow that salvation stands in God's hands alone. But that would be a misfortune. For if salvation stood in God's hand alone, human "self-determination," "personal self-settlement," etc., would be absent, and thus the whole process would assume a character unworthy of man. As conversion, so also perseverance would become a compulsion, and human "responsibility" would be lost. Synergism draws our attention to these "necessary consequences" in the event that salvation were not also dependent on man. But synergism also seeks to prove from Scripture that salvation does not stand in God's hands alone. As proofs it uses — just as in the case of conversion — *primo loco* the imperative and conditional sentences. Thus we heard in the United States: "'Work out that you may be saved with fear and trembling,' exhorts the apostle in Phil. 2:12. It cannot be expressed more strongly that the salvation of man does not depend in every respect on God alone; for literally translated it even says: 'Work out or bring about your salvation.'" ⁴⁴¹⁾ Further, from time immemorial until our own time, the conclusion from the cause of apostasy to the cause of perseverance has also been urged in regard to perseverance: If evil works and evil behavior cause the cessation of faith, then perseverance in faith must logically depend on the avoidance of evil behavior or on the performance of right behavior.⁴⁴²⁾ In general, in the doctrine of perseverance, all the arguments with which synergism combats the monergism of grace in conversion return.

But in spite of all synergistic fears and counter-reasons, the fact cannot be denied that the Scriptures teach divine sole efficacy, as in conversion, so also in regard to perseverance in the faith. According to Scripture, as the

440) Cf. [II, 580](#).

441) Luth. Kirchenzeitung 26, no. 10.

442) Cf. the remarks on and against Majorism, p. 26 ff. Majorism justified its proposition of the necessity of good works for salvation in more detail by declaring that good works are necessary ad fidem retinendam sive non amittendam. [to keep the faith or not to lose it] Cf. [Frank II, 195 ff.](#)

origin of faith,⁴⁴³⁾ so also the perseverance is an effect of the divine omnipotence. Peter assures the Christians: "You are saved by God's power through faith unto salvation." ⁴⁴⁴⁾ Also in Christ's words Joh. 10:28-30 it is expressed very clearly that behind the non-falling away of His own stands His divine omnipotence as *causa efficiens*: "No one will snatch them out of My hand. The Father who gave them to me is greater than all" (omnipotent), "and no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one." ⁴⁴⁵⁾ Paul instructs Christians that God works the beginning and the end of the Christian state: "He who began the good work in you will carry it out (επιτελέσει) until the day of Jesus Christ." ⁴⁴⁶⁾ God's, not our faithfulness is the guarantee of our perseverance: "Faithful (πιστός) is He who calls you, who will also do it (δὲς καὶ ποιήσει)""the Lord is faithful (πιστός), who will strengthen you and keep you (φυλάξει) from evil".⁴⁴⁸⁾ The admonition addressed to Christians to create their salvation with fear and trembling is justified by Scripture with the fact that salvation does not stand in their hands, but in God's hands:: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling! For it is God who works in you both to will and to do, according to His good pleasure." ⁴⁴⁹⁾ It is an evil habit of the synergists to separate the exhortation in v. 12 from the reasoning of the exhortation in v. 13 at this point. They

443) Eph. 1:19. 20.

444) 1 Pet. 1:5. Chemnitz on this passage: *In virtute Dei per fidem conservamur ad salutem, paratam revelari in tempore novissimo. Audis conservationem salutis, donec reveletur in novissimo die, tribui virtuti Dei per fidem; ibidem v. 9: Reportantes finem fidei vestrae, salutem animarum. ... Et recte huc accommodari potest illud Pauli Rom. 4:14: Si conservatio salutis ex nostra impletione legis, hoc est, ex nostris operibus, dependet, tum extincta est fides et abolita promissio. Ut ergo firma sit promissio salutis non tantum accipiendae, verum etiam conservandae, ideo sine operibus ex fide et secundum gratiam salus datur.* [[Google](#)] (*Loci* 1599 III, 64 sq.)

445) Here the numerical unity of the omnipotence of the Father and the Son, based on the numerical unity of the divine being, is stated. (Cf. [II, 62 f.](#), and [note 32](#).) And in this preserving omnipotence it is founded that the attacks of all hostile powers remain unsuccessful.

446) Phil. 1:6. 447) 1 Thess. 5:24.

448) 2 Thess. 3:3. 449) Phil. 2:12-13.

quote, as we saw above, the exhortation v. 12: "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling!" and attach to it the conclusion: "It cannot be expressed more strongly that the salvation of man does not depend in every respect on God alone," while the apostle v. 13 continues in support of his exhortation, "For it is God who works in you (ὁ θεὸς γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν υμῖν) both willing and doing according to his good pleasure." And the apostle has good reason for his reasoning. There is ultimately only one cause of the failure or loss of faith. It is self-confidence creeping in, that is, the synergistic opinion that salvation depends not on God's work of grace alone, but also on "self-determination," "right conduct." This is how Peter fell. At least in comparison with others, Peter trusted himself to behave more correctly and thus to persevere. "If they were all offended, yet I would not be offended,"⁴⁵⁰⁾ οὐκ ἐγώ, Peter! The Lord foretold Peter the result of his self-confidence: "This night, before the cock crows twice, you will deny me three times."⁴⁵¹⁾ After only a few hours, Peter cursed and swore that he did not know the Lord. Luther calls the sense according to which man does not want to be dependent on God's grace alone in order to attain salvation the "vexatious secret spite," which is still stirring in Christians according to the flesh and must go forth relentlessly fought, if the former is not to become the latter.⁴⁵²⁾ The apostle wants to take the Philippians from this "secret deception"

450) Mark. 14:29, 451) Mark 14:30.

452) We recall here once again Luther's comment on the words Matt. 20:16 ("So the last will be first and the first last"): "Therefore it is necessary that this gospel be preached in our time to those who now know the gospel, to me and my kind, who are able to teach and master all the world, and consider that we are next to them and have eaten up God's Spirit purely with feathers and feet. ... It hits the deepest in the heart, the own spiritual conceit, which even in poverty, dishonor, misfortune considers itself the first, yes, then most of all. ... It goes very high and hits very good people: yes, it frightens the greatest saints. That is why Christ himself reproaches the apostles. One also stands how the very highest saints were afraid here, how many also fell here from the high spiritual state. ... Behold, how Saul fell! How he made David fall! How Peter fell! How some of Paul's disciples fell!" (St. L. XI, 513 f.)

when he justifies the exhortation to work out salvation with fear and trembling with the fact that it is God who works willing and accomplishing according to his good pleasure. And Synergism nourishes, nurtures, and strengthens this "secret deception" with the thesis it so zealously advocates, that, like conversion, salvation depends not only on God's effect of grace, but also on proper human conduct. The synergistic doctrine of perseverance is therefore an extremely harmful doctrine. It is a direct temptation to apostasy. Just as no one has ever been converted according to the synergistic prescription, so no one will persevere in the faith according to the synergistic prescription and obtain the end of faith. Luther says: "The cunning of Satan, with which he seduced Eve, cannot be guarded against in any way by our own powers, so that he does not distort our senses from the simplicity in Christ, unless the Lord keeps us going far away, provoked by our humble prayer. For here free will avails nothing; nor is it enough of the first grace, as they call it, but perseverance (*perseverantia*) is needed, which stands not in the will of man, but in the preservation of God (*est non volentis hominis, sed sustentantis Dei*)."⁴⁵³⁾

As is well known, synergism binds with its doctrine of perseverance also the exhortation to renounce the certainty of salvation.⁴⁵⁴⁾ This admonition is quite unnecessary from the synergistic point of view. Doubt about the attainment of salvation comes quite naturally, if salvation also depends on man himself. The only thing to remember is that the exhortation does not go far enough if it only recommends and demands uncertainty. Consequently, it should call upon Christians to be quite certain of their damnation, because nothing good dwells in Christians either, apart from the effect of God's grace.⁴⁵⁵⁾ In general, the fall from faith has already happened when someone thinks not only at the study table and in pamphlets, but also in his heart and before God that

453) S1. L. IV, 1008 f. *Exeg. opp. lat.* XVI, 16 sq.

454) So already Latermann, *Disput. de praedestinatione, thes. 43*: *Quia homo certus est, quod spe salutis excidere possit, propterea eum non posse non eSse dubium de finali perseverantia*. (In Quenstedt II, 819.)

455) Rom. 7:18.

his salvation does not stand in God's hand of grace alone, but also depends on his conduct. In any case, the Christian faith has the nature in itself to build on grace alone, and ceases to exist at the same moment that one expands its foundation and places human behavior next to God's grace.⁴⁵⁶⁾ A faith enriched in its foundation of trust by human behavior is also not wrought by the Holy Spirit, but owes its existence to the evil flesh and the arch-enemy of men, who thereby wants to push Christians out of the faith, as he succeeded in doing with Peter. On the other hand, the testimony of the truth revealed in Scripture, that we are saved to salvation by God's power through faith, is the means of the Holy Spirit, by which He produces and strengthens faith again and again, and thus sustains it. Christian faith always arises and exists only *vis-a-vis* the *sola gratia Dei*.

One more point in the synergistic doctrine of preservation must be pointed out. Against the scriptural passages which ascribe the salvation to the omnipotence and grace of God, the synergists object that with this, indeed, salvation is promised against all other hostile powers, but not against the Christians' own evil flesh. Thus Philippi.⁴⁵⁷⁾ It is also possible for Meyer, by inserting this limitation, to turn the meaning of the relevant scriptural statements into the very opposite.⁴⁵⁸⁾ Likewise, Lyman Beecher seems to have had this limitation in mind when he, on the question whether he believed the perseverance of the saints,

456) Apol. 114, 33. [[Trigl. 163, Apol., III, 33](#) 

457) Epistle to the Romans, Rom. 8:35-36: "Although it is true that no one and nothing is able to snatch us out of the hand of God and Christ, because their omnipotence and grace is stronger than all earthly powers, this does not at all exclude the possibility that we ourselves willfully and voluntarily can escape this hand. Even if tribulation is not able to separate us from God, sin is able to do so."

458) E.g. to Phil. 1:6: "Resistance as a human possibility is not excluded by this; but Paul does not have to fear it with his Philippians as with the Galatians." Exactly the opposite is found in ch. 2:12-13. Because Paul also fears synergistic "resistance" in his Philippians as in all believers, namely the self-confidence that salvation does not depend on God alone but also on themselves, he adds: "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do according to His good pleasure."

answered, "I do, except when the wind is from the East." ⁴⁵⁹⁾ But nothing of this limitation stands in the Scriptures. But the opposite stands there. According to 1 Peter 1:3-5, God has given Christians a new birth "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, which is reserved in heaven for you who are saved by the power of God through faith to salvation". Two things are stated in these words: 1. the inheritance of Christians is kept for them in heaven by God; 2. they, Christians, are kept for the inheritance by God's power through faith, so that the inheritance and the heirs do not come apart but remain together. We note also in this passage that the "by God's power" has with it the proximate clause "by faith" (διὰ πίστεως). Thus, firstly, such divine power action is denoted, which takes place through the Gospel (the means of grace), because faith and the Evangelical word of promise are *correlativa*.⁴⁶⁰⁾ Then, the divine power effect is also described as one that extends to the interior, to the heart and mind of Christians, and causes them to remain in faith in the Gospel of *sola gratia*. Therefore, Christians pray not only: "Do not take away from my mouth the word of truth!"⁴⁶¹⁾ but also: "Incline my heart to your testimonies!" ⁴⁶²⁾ "Create in me, God, a clean heart and give me a new certain spirit!" ⁴⁶³⁾ The scriptural statements mentioned above, Phil. 2:13: "It is God who works in you (ἐν ὑμῖν) both to will and to do"; Phil. 1:6: "He who

459) Strong, [Systematic Theology p. 883](#)

460) Therefore, the Calvinist error that "efficacious grace", because it is an effect of divine omnipotence, does not take place by means, is also rejected with the "by faith". So also Hodge, [Syst. Theol. II, 682 sqq](#): "Efficacious grace acts immediately." "Regeneration itself, the infusion of a new life into the soul, is the immediate work of the Spirit. There is here no place for the use of means any more than in the act of creation." This is a false dichotomy. As the Scripture ascribes the origin and preservation of faith to the divine omnipotence (Eph. 1:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:5), so it also explicitly teaches that faith, which takes hold of and sustains grace, comes from the word of grace and has the word of grace as its object (Rom. 10:17, 8). For more on this, see the following section on the means of grace.

461) Ps. 119:43.

462) Ps. 119:36.

463) Ps. 51:12.

began the good work in you (ἐν ὑμῖν) will carry it out" (*scil.* in you) "until the day of Jesus Christ";⁴⁶⁴ 2 Thess. 3:3: "The Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and keep you from evil"; 1 Pet. 5:10: "The God of all grace ... will prepare you, strengthen you, fortify you, establish you. To Him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen." The doxology expresses the Christians' thanksgiving for preservation because they believe, through the action of the Holy Spirit, that preservation stands in God's hand of grace alone, as the emphasized αὐτός (αὐτός καταρτίσει κτλ.) still insists. If we ask for the theological or rather untheological reason for the whimsical doctrine that Christians would be preserved "by God's power through faith" against all other hostile powers, but not against their own evil flesh, we pointed out earlier that a mixture of law and gospel is used.⁴⁶⁵ The warnings against apostasy, which are directed against the carnal security and self-confidence of the old man,⁴⁶⁷ are used for this purpose,

464) Correct is Meyer on this passage: ἐν ὑμῖν ἡπί not among you, but in you, in animis vestris.

465) II, 486. 466) 1 Cor. 10:12; Rom. 11:20.

467) Balduin: *Oppositus est hic timor a Paulo nobis commendatus 1. epicureae securitati, qua fides suffocatur, Spiritus Sanctus contristatur et gratia Dei deperditur; 2. spirituali superbiae et arrogantiae, ne fiducia donorum insolescamus, sed toti a gratia misericordiae Dei pendeamus, operam dantes, ne illa excidamus.* [[Google](#)] (*Disput. de cap. 2, ep. ad Philipp.* By Baier III, 598.) — Chemnitz: *Quando respicimus ad Dei voluntatem in verbo patefactam et ad Christ mediatorem, possumus et debemus statuere: Quis separabit nos? Certus sum enim, quod nec praesentia nec futura separabunt etc. Vocati enim sumus ad consortium Christi non ut quos recipit, mox velit iterum abiicere. Sed est salvator sempiternus: vocati sumus ad consortium Christi aeternum. Est Pater aeternus et dona atque vocatio Dei sunt sine poenitentia. Nemo rapiet eos de manu mea. Certa igitur est, quod ad Deum, perseverantia piorum. Et quia in verbo ita revelatum est, fides hoc debet credere. Sed Paulus dicit Rom. 11:22: Si permanseritis in bonitate Dei, et Hebr. 3:14: Modo fiduciam retineamus usque ad finem. Respondeo: Iohannes dicit: Haec scribe vobis, ut sciatis, quod vitam habetis aeternam. Scimus, quod cum apparuerit similes ei erimus. Phil. 1:6: Persuasus sum, quod qui coepit in vobis etc. [[Google](#)] Ita et 1 Cor. 1:8. Ita David dicit Ps. 31:1: Non confundar in aeternum. Ideo iubemur orare pro perseverantia, quia Deus promisi. Oratio enim semper requirit promissionem, et ut fiat sine haesitatione. Oramus autem et luctamur, ne camis petulantia donum perseverantiae*

to limit the gospel, which promises them preservation from God's power through faith in grace, to the shattered souls, who with Paul have come to despair of themselves,⁴⁶⁸⁾ and thereby to transfer the attainment of salvation from God's hand of grace into man's hand, that is, into the realm of the law. The souls that have come to despair of themselves are to put the law completely out of sight and hold to the gospel alone. The gospel, however, promises salvation with the present grace.⁴⁶⁹⁾ Hence the admonition of the Formula of Concord: "Care must be taken that works are not drawn into the article of justification and salvation. For this reason, the propositions that believers need good works for salvation, that is, that it is impossible to be saved without good works, are justly rejected. For they are strictly against the doctrine *de particulis exclusivis in articulo iustificationis et salvationis*, that is, they dispute against the words by which St. Paul completely excluded our works and merit from the article of justification and salvation (*salutis nostrae*) and ascribed everything to the grace of God and the merit of Christ alone, as declared in the preceding article. Again, they take away the consolation of the Gospel from the afflicted, troubled consciences, give cause for doubt, are dangerous in many ways, strengthen the presumption of one's own righteousness and confidence in one's own works, are accepted by the papists for this purpose, and are led to their advantage against the pure doctrine of the alone-saving faith."⁴⁷⁰⁾ The same can be said about the doubts about salvation that are actually found among Christians as about the doubts about the present state of grace.⁴⁷¹⁾

In the doctrine of perseverance, too, it again becomes clear that the Christian and the synergistic doctrines are like yes and no to each other. According to the Christian doctrine,

excutiat. Et haec distinctio hanc quaestionem de perseverantia utiliter illustrat. [Google] (Loci 1599 II, 709.) The same: Manifesta est confusio et depravatio discriminis inter legem et evangelium, expresse pugnans cum doctrina Pauli, docere, quod nostra opera sint necessaria ad salutem. [Google] (1. c. III, 63.)

468) Rom. 7:18.

469) Cf. the explanation II, 485 f.

470) F.C. 628, 22 f. [Trigl. 945, Sol. Decl., IV, 22 f. 

471) II,

in order to become saved, the killing of the old man is necessary. This killing takes place in such a way that the old man with all his ability, including his "right conduct", his "self-decision", "personal self-setting", etc., is "beaten into a heap", "driven into terror and despondency"⁴⁷²⁾ and then, by means of the gospel, faith in the grace of God in Christ is evoked and preserved through God's action. According to synergistic doctrine, becoming blessed is not a killing, but only a "renaissance" of the old man. The old man does not have to be killed, but only stirred up and educated, so that he "behaves rightly" against grace and beside grace, and carries out the right "Personal Self-Setting". In this process, it is true, the more or less powerful effect of grace is needed. Erasmus also quoted scriptural passages like Joh. 15:5: "Without me you can do nothing." But the effect of grace must stop at the limit of human self-decision.⁴⁷³⁾ It must not go so far as to make salvation dependent on God's grace alone. Rather, salvation must also depend on right conduct, on the self-determination of man. The salvation must remain decisive in the behavior of man. While those who believe Rom. 7:18 find it comforting that they are saved to salvation by God's power through faith, the representatives of synergism, who put their theology into practice, see their personal comfort in the fact that their salvation does not depend on God's grace alone, but also on their behavior.

One wonders again and again how it is possible that even those to whom one may not deny personal Christianity advocate the synergistic perseverance doctrine, which so directly contradicts Scripture and Christian experience. We can only repeat here what we have already said about "the real reasons" for conversion synergism.⁴⁷⁴⁾ First, the *opinio legis* inherent in all men must be pointed out. Then we stand here again before the *crux theologorum*: "Why do some persist and others not?" If nothing good dwells in all believers according to their

472) Smalc. Art. 312, 2. [[Trigl. 479](#), [Smalc. Art., Part III, Art. II, 2](#) [🔗](#)]

473) Luthardt, [Die christl. Glaubenslehre](#), p. 442.

474) [II, 580 ff.](#)

flesh, and the grace of God is universal and earnest, then either all should persevere or all should fall away. But in fact only some persevere, while the others fall away. Now whoever has not yet learned with Luther and the Formula of Concord to be at ease with *sola gratia Dei* as the ground of perseverance and *sola culpa hominis* as the ground of apostasy, that is, to acknowledge a mystery insoluble in this life when asked why some persevere and others do not, will fall into the ditch either to the left or to the right. He will adopt either the Calvinistic doctrine of perseverance, which is contrary to Scripture, or the synergistic doctrine of perseverance, which is contrary to Scripture. Therefore, it is necessary to take to heart the instruction and admonition that the Formula of Concord applies not only to conversion but also to perseverance: "For no injustice is done those who are punished and receive the wages of their sins; but to others, when God gives and upholds his word, and thereby enlightens, converts, and preserves men, God gives glory to his pure grace and mercy without their merit. But what in this disputation wants to run too high and out of these bounds" (namely, what goes beyond *sola culpa in the case of some and sola gratia in the case of others*), "we should take our finger to our mouth with Paulo, remembering and saying, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" ⁴⁷⁵⁾

Although it has been objected that the certainty of perseverance through divine grace alone produces spiritual arrogance, it is obvious that the exact opposite is the case. The certainty of perseverance by God's grace through faith in the divine promise of grace includes in itself the renunciation of all one's own power and thus true spiritual humility, while the contrary opinion, that perseverance depends not only on God's power and grace but also on man himself, is pride and produces a pride that comes before the fall. — Equally incorrect is the objection that the certainty of perseverance through the divine effect of grace results in carnal security and indolence in sanctification and good works. The greater the certainty that we are saved to salvation by God's power through faith, the greater is our gratitude

475) F. C. 716, 57-63 [[Trigl. 1083, XI, 61-63](#) .

toward God and love for God, and therefore the greater the zeal to avoid sin and serve God in good works.⁴⁷⁶⁾ The greater the certainty regarding the heavenly inheritance, the greater the patience and strength in the suffering of this time,⁴⁷⁷⁾ and the less the attraction of the things of this world.⁴⁷⁸⁾ On the other hand, lack of assurance of blessedness necessarily results in lack of thanksgiving to God and lack of strength to resist the lure of the world and the flesh.⁴⁷⁹⁾ Luther says (IX, 516): "If anyone could with certain and constant faith hold to it, and comprehend the greatness of the good, that he was a child and heir of God, he would regard all that there is of power and treasure in all the kingdoms of the world as filth and dung in comparison with his heavenly inheritance. Everything that the world has in high and glorious things would be disgusting to him, and the greater the world's glory and splendor, the more he would be hostile to it; in short, everything that the world admires and praises highly would be ugly and void in his eyes. For what is the whole world with its power, wealth and glory against God, whose heir and child he is? ... But the law in the members, which is contrary to the law of the mind, does not make faith perfect."

Finally, it should be pointed out that the living knowledge of Rom. 7:18 or the amicable despair of one's own strength leads first of all to diligent contact with God's Word, that is, to diligent use of the means by which God has promised to perfect the good work begun in us.⁴⁸⁰⁾ Secondly, the realization that our salvation stands in God's hands alone drives us to humble supplication and entreaty to God, which has never gone unheard, but has the unconditional promise of being heard.⁴⁸¹⁾

476) 2 Cor. 7:1; Gal. 2:20.

477) Rom. 8:18; Luke 12:32.

478) 1 John 2:16-17; 1 Cor 7:29-31.

479) Matt 6:21.

480) Jn. 8:51. concord. 600, 50-56. [*Trigl. 901, F. C., Sol. Decl., II, 50-*


56 


481) Joh. 6:37; Ps. 10:17; Matt. 11:28; Ps. 31:23; Is. 57:15.


Means of Grace. ^

(*De mediis gratiae.*)

As God reconciled the world to himself through Christ's vicarious satisfaction, without consulting men concerning this peculiar method of reconciliation, so also, without consulting men for counsel, he has ordained the means by which he will unfailingly make known to men his gracious disposition, or, what is the same, both offer to men the forgiveness of sins purchased by Christ, and work faith in the forgiveness offered, and, if faith already exists, strengthen it. These God-ordained means are called in church expression fittingly the means of grace.⁴⁸²⁾ Such means of grace are, as will be explained in more detail below, the word of the gospel and baptism and the Lord's Supper. According to the Scriptures, these means have a double power: 1. a presenting or giving power (*vis exhibitiva, dativa, collativa*), 2. an effective power based in them (*vis effectiva sive operativa*). The offering power consists in offering to men the forgiveness of sins available through Christ's atoning work, that is, grace in the sense of God's gracious disposition (*favor Dei*).⁴⁸³⁾ In other words, the means of grace are the means by which God reveals His heart, fully reconciled through Christ, to men, or gives men, for the sake of. The means of grace are, in other words, the means by which God reveals his heart, which is completely reconciled through Christ, to men or makes a declaration of love to men for the sake of Christ's work, which is to be believed by men. The effective power of the means of grace consists in the fact that God, through these means, because they promise the forgiveness of sins or reveal God's gracious heart or are a divine declaration of love, also produces faith in the forgiveness of sins offered and, where it already exists, strengthens it.⁴⁸⁴⁾ One would think that people would leave

482) *Media gratiae, instrumenta gratiae*. Konkordienf. 602, 58 [[Trigl. 903, Sol. Decl., II, 57-58](#) ]: "Des Heiligen Geistes Werkzeuge", "*instrumenta sive media Spiritus Sancti*".

483) Formula of Concord 602, 57 [[Trigl. 903, Sol. Decl., II, 57](#) ]: "Christ offers his grace to all men in the word and holy sacraments"; "*Christus omnibus hominibus clementiam suam [his gracious disposition] in verbo et sacramentis offert*".

484) Formula of Concord 602, 56 [[Trigl. 903, Sol. Decl., II, 56](#) ]: "The preached, heard Word of God is an office and work (*ministerium et organon*) of the Holy Spirit, through which He is certainly powerful

unchallenged the means of grace ordered by God Himself. But this is by no means the case. Just as human criticism has called the divine method of world reconciliation unworthy of God and man, so it has also objected to the means of grace ordered by God. Some, like Zwingli, are of the decided opinion that it is unworthy of God to bind himself with his revelation and efficacy to such external means as the Word and the sacraments are; the Holy Spirit has no need of a chariot for his efficacy.⁴⁸⁵⁾ In other words, Zwingli and the great crowd of his comrades declare the means of grace ordered by God to be unnecessary and obstructive to true piety. The others — and this is especially the case with the Romans — make their own means of grace⁴⁸⁶⁾ and make corrections to the means ordered by God.⁴⁸⁷⁾ This is the reason why dogmatics has to deal with the Christian doctrine of the means of grace. It will also become evident that the rejection and every change of the means of grace ordered by God touches the central article of the Christian doctrine, the article of justification by faith without works of the law. When the means of grace are rejected and changed, the attainment of salvation always stands on human works rather than on Christ's substitutionary satisfaction.

The means of grace in general. ^

It has been correctly remarked, "The dogmatic understanding of the means of grace takes its starting point from the relation they have to the work of Christ."⁴⁸⁸⁾ But, unfortunately, little is said with the expression "work of Christ," inasmuch as this expression was formerly and is now used in very different meanings. Some do not allow the work of Christ to be extensively perfect,

and works in our hearts (*vere efficax, est et operatur*)." Augustana, Art. V: "To obtain such faith [which is counted for righteousness], God has instituted the ministry, given the gospel and sacraments, by which he gives as by means (*tamquam per instrumenta*) the Holy Spirit, who works (*efficit*) faith where and when he wills in those who hear the gospel."

485) *Fidei Ratio*, p. 24 (Niemeyer).

486) About the Roman seven sacraments later.

487) On the chalice denial in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

488) R. Seeberg in RE. 3 VI, 726.

applying it only to a part of humanity.⁴⁸⁹⁾ The others give Christ's work of reconciliation a relation to all men, but they deny its intensive perfection. They maintain that Christ's work is not sufficient for salvation, but that aliquid in homine — a human achievement, a goodness inherent in man, faith as a moral achievement, self-determination, faith as the germ of good works, the new life and good works themselves, etc. — must be added if Christ's work or the grace acquired by it is to be of use to man for salvation. With these strange understandings of the "work of Christ" everything else comes out, except the scriptural concept of the means of grace. The means of grace are no longer means of grace, but means of stimulation for human efforts of virtue under different names and in different degrees.

In expounding the doctrine of the means of grace, the general objective reconciliation or justification is to be assumed. This is how we find it in Scripture. Scripture binds what it teaches of the divine communication of the grace acquired by Christ directly to the fact of the objective reconciliation or justification of the whole world of sinners. It is necessary to repeat here, and to elaborate in the individual parts, what has already been said in the summary exposition of the acquisition of salvation. The atonement effected by Christ is a historically perfected, backward fact (θεός ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ), which relates to the whole human world and is thoroughly objective in character. It consists, in fact, not in a change of mind or "moral transformation" on the part of men, but in the fact that God, with Himself, in His heart, did not impute to the world of men their sins, but forgave them.⁴⁹⁰⁾ With this report of the general objective reconciliation that has taken place, the apostle immediately binds the further instruction that God has raised up among us the word of reconciliation that has taken place, καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς ["hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation"], so that men may become partakers of the reconciliation that has taken place.

Therefore, the means of grace is first of all the word of reconciliation or **the word of the gospel**. To be excluded from

489) Thus, all Calvinist Reformed.

490) 2 Cor. 5:19: μή λογίζομενος ἀντοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν. {“ not imputing their trespasses unto them “}

the term "means of grace" the law of God, which is also contained in Scripture, because the law does not promise forgiveness of sins or grace to men who have transgressed it — and this is the case with all men — but, on the contrary, proclaims God's wrath and condemnation. The law, therefore, is expressly called ἡ διακονία τῆς κατακρίσεως ["ministration of condemnation"],⁴⁹¹⁾ while, in contrast, the gospel is the διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης ["ministration of righteousness"].⁴⁹²⁾ Here it is still necessary to remember a double thing. First of all, the Gospel is a means of grace not only in the sense that it teaches us about the forgiveness of sins, but also in the sense that every time the Gospel comes to us men, the act of absolving sins takes place on the part of God on the individual or individuals. Luther's words belong here: "The gospel itself is a general absolution; for it is a promise, which all and each one in particular are to accept from God's command."⁴⁹³⁾ Secondly: The Gospel is such a means of grace in all forms of testimony: as preached,⁴⁹⁴⁾ written and read,⁴⁹⁵⁾ spoken in the form of absolution,⁴⁹⁶⁾ expressed in signs,⁴⁹⁷⁾ in the heart

491) Luther: "the ministry that preaches condemnation"; Meyer: "the ministry that conveys condemnation."

492) 2 Cor. 3:9. Luther: "the ministry that preaches righteousness"; Meyer: "the ministry that imparts righteousness". That δικαιοσύνη is to be taken juridically here as forgiveness of sins or justification is evident from the contrast κατάκρισις. Meyer on this passage: "Note the contrast of and δικαιοσύνη! The former is an *actus forensis*, so the latter is also based on imputation. This against Hofmann, Schriftbeweis I, 627 f."

493) St. L. XXI b, 1849.

494) Mark 16:15-16: Κηρύξατε τὸ εὐαγγέλιον — δ πιστεύσας—σωθήσεται. Luke 24:47: εδει κηρυγθῆναι — ἀφ᾽ εἰς ἁμαρτιῶν.

495) Joh. 20:31: Ταῦτα γέγραπται, ἵνα πιστεύαητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός. ["these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ"].. 1 John 1:3-4: "What we have seen and heard we declare to you...and these things we write to you, καὶ ταῦτα γράφομεν ὑμῖν, that your joy may be complete."

496) Joh. 20:23: Ἀν τινὼν ἀψητε τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἀφεωνται αὐτοῖς. The expression, "Whose soever sins ye remit," indicates that the Gospel is here thought of in its application to certain persons, that is, in the form of individual absolution.

497) E.g. by a crucifix or another image, Joh. 3:14-15. Luther often reminds us that in the Papacy many dying people were reminded of Christ's vicarious satisfaction by a crucifix held up in front of them and thus died saved. St. L. XIII, 2575: "So I also believe that our dear God.

moved⁴⁹⁸) etc. Even more recent Lutheran theologians, in the interest of combating the inspiration of Holy Scriptures, have expressed and advocated the peculiar opinion that not the word read, but only the word preached is the means of grace.⁴⁹⁹) As far as the presentation of grace and the effect of faith are concerned, Scripture places the Word of God that is read and the Word of God that is preached on an equal footing, as is already evident from the scriptural passages cited earlier. Against the calling to Rom. 10:17 Gerhard already said what was necessary: "When Rom. 10:17 says: When it is said in Rom. 10:17 that 'faith comes from the sermon,' this is not to be understood exclusively, so that the hearing of the preached word is opposed to the reading of the written word, but inclusively, so that God is not only active through the heard word, but also through the read word for faith and salvation, because it is

has preserved many of our ancestors in the great darkness of the papacy. For in the same blindness and darkness it nevertheless remained that the crucifix was held up to the dying, and that some laymen said to him: Look at Jesus, who died for you on the cross. In this way many a dying man has turned back to Christ, even if he had believed the false miraculous signs before and had adhered to idolatry." Similarly [St. L. VIII, 183](#); [XI, 528](#); [XXII, 471](#).

498) Rom. 10:8: "Close to you is the word, in your mouth and in your heart." In this passage the word of the gospel is addressed in contrast to the word of the law (v. 5-7). He who moves a word of the gospel in his heart has divine absolution from all his sins in the word with which he thus occupies himself (cf. [II, 613 ff.](#)), and it is only necessary to appropriate the absolution by faith. The Word moved in the heart as a means of grace is also pointed to by the Formula of Concord (601, 54 [[Trigl. 903](#), [Sol. Decl., II, 54](#) [🔗](#)]): *Per annuntiationem ac meditationem evangelii de gratuita et clementissima peccatorum remissione in Christo scintillula fidei in corde ipsius [hominis] accenditur, quae remissionem peccatorum propter Christ amplectitur et sese promissione evangelii consolatur et hoc modo Spiritus Sanctus, qui haec omnia operatur, in cor mittitur.* [[Google](#)]

499) Thus especially the Dorpat theologians at the beginning of the eighties of the last century. Volck, "Die Bibel als Kanon," p. 14: "What is it, then, that brings the individual to faith in Christ and thus makes him a Christian? Is it the reading of the Bible? No! but the testimony of the church about Christ, which comes to him in this or that form. Faith comes from the sermon," says Paul. If it were awakened by reading the Bible, the task of mission would be a simple one. It would then be allowed to send Bibles in their language only to the various pagan peoples, provided they were literate." Several Baltic pastors wrote against the Dorpat professors. Thus F. Nerling, [The Bible as a Revelation of Salvation. Reval 1886](#).

and remains one and the same Word, whether it is preached and heard or written and read. Therefore John characteristically says of the written evangelical history and therefore of the whole Scripture Old and New Testament: "These are written that you may believe," John 20:31, and: 'These things we write unto you, that your joy may be made perfect,' 1 John 1:4. Hence also from the written Word of God, when it is put into use by reading and meditating upon it, faith and spiritual joy, and consequently salvation, may be drawn."⁵⁰⁰ —. If the opinion has been expressed;⁵⁰¹) "The Word of Scripture reproduced by printing acquires toward baptized persons and yet toward thousands the character of an effect at a distance (*actio in distans*), both in space and in time," this is not the fault of the Word of Scripture, but of the readers who do not consider the Word of Scripture to be the Word of God, and especially also the fault of the theological professors who spread such erroneous thoughts about Scripture among the people. But he who takes the Scriptures for God's own Word, as they themselves demand,⁵⁰²) does not think, when he reads the Scriptures, of an "effect at a distance, both in space and in time," but he conceives the situation to be that, as often as he reads the Bible, God Himself speaks to him, who by the Word of the Law convicts him of his sin and worthiness of damnation, and by the Word of the Gospel promises him the forgiveness of sins and salvation, and makes him believe this Word of the Gospel. As Christ is called to recognize the requirement of the law from the written law: "How stands in the law written? How do you read?"⁵⁰³) and teaches to recognize himself as Savior from the written gospel: "Search the Scriptures, for you think that you have eternal life in them; and it is they that testify of me"⁵⁰⁴) and: "If you believed Moses, you would believe me also; for he wrote of me",⁵⁰⁵) so also the Formula of Concord puts the word of the gospel, heard and read, on the same level as a means of grace, when it says:

500) *L. de Scriptura s.*, § 365.

501) Thus A. von Öttingen, [Luth Dogmatik II^{II}](#), p. 335.

502) 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21 (the προφητεία γραφής is addressed); 1 Cor. 15:37 etc.

503) Luke 10:26-28; Matt. 22:35-40.

504) Joh. 5:39.

505) Joh. 5:46.

"God wills "by this means, and in no other way, namely, through His holy Word, when men hear it preached or read it, and the holy Sacraments when they are used according to His Word, God desires to call men to eternal salvation, draw them to Himself, and convert, regenerate, and sanctify them." ⁵⁰⁶⁾

However, God has also bound the promise of the forgiveness of sins to certain outward acts ordered by Him⁵⁰⁷⁾, namely **Baptism** and the **Lord's Supper**. Scripture explicitly says that Baptism is "for the forgiveness of sins" or for the "washing away of sins."⁵⁰⁸⁾ Likewise, in the Lord's Supper, Christ gives His body as given away (διδόμενον) and His blood as shed "for the remission of sins."⁵⁰⁹⁾ Therefore, baptism and the Lord's Supper are also among the means of grace. They have been called "verbum visibile" and "sacraments" because of the visibility of the actions to which the promise of the forgiveness of sins is attached, as distinguished from the mere word of the Gospel.⁵¹⁰⁾

All means of grace have the same purpose and effect. ^

The scriptural concept of the means of grace includes that all means of grace have the same purpose and the same effect, namely the presentation of the forgiveness of sins and the thereby effected generation and strengthening of faith. It does not stand that the first third of the forgiveness of sins comes through the word of the gospel, the second third through baptism, and the third third through the Lord's Supper. We have already seen that the Scriptures without any limitation

506) p. 600, 50. likewise 601, 53. [[Trigl. 901, Sol. Decl., II, 50, 53](#) &]

507) [Actiones circa elementum quoddam externum et visibile occupatae](#).

508) Acts 2:38: Βαπτισθήτω εκατος υμών επί τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς ἁψαν ἁμαρτιῶν. Acts 22:16: Βάπτισαι καὶ ἀπόλουσαι τας ἁμαρτίας σου. Meyer on the latter passage: "Here, too, baptism is that by means of which forgiveness of sins committed in the pre-Christian life occurs. Cf. 2:38; Eph. 5:26; 1 Cor. 6:11 clauses in Calvin, in order not to let grace be linked to the sacrament."

509) Luke 22:19-20; Matt. 26:26-28.

510) Apology 202, 5 [[Trigl. 309, XIII, 5](#) &]: "As the word enters the ears, so the outward sign is set for the eyes, as to stir up and move the heart inwardly to faith. For the word and the outward sign have the same effect in the heart, as Augustine spoke a fine word. The sacrament, he says, is a visible word (*verbum visibile*). For the outward sign is a painting (*quasi pictura*), by which is signified (*idem significans*) the same thing that is preached by the word. Therefore, both align one and the same."

ascribes the forgiveness of sins to the word of the Gospel as well as to Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Therefore, all means of grace have the *vis effectiva* of awakening and strengthening faith.⁵¹¹⁾ And where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation together with the fullness of divine gifts. Especially more recent theologians want to assign different effects to the various means of grace. They want to ascribe rebirth to baptism as distinct from the word of the gospel, and a special physical effect, for example the planting of the resurrection body, to the Lord's Supper as distinct from the gospel and baptism.⁵¹²⁾ But this is done without scriptural ground. As certainly

511) [A. C., Art. V](#) and [XIII](#).

512) RE. 2 XIII, 298 f. For a brief account of the more recent purposes for Baptism and for the Lord's Supper, see [Luthardt, Dogmatik](#), ¹¹[pp. 373. 386 f.](#) Cf. Nitzsch-Stephan, [Ev. Dogmatik, pp. 646 ff.](#) Walther, in his edition of Baier's Compendium ([III, 526 f.](#)), cites a lengthy quotation from [Georg König](#) († 1654), from which it can be seen that the old Lutheran theologians also dealt in detail with the question of whether a kind of physical effect could also be ascribed to the Lord's Supper. König denies the question, attributing not only to people like Weigel, but also to some "*Casus consc.*, p. 484 sqq. 494 sq.: *An per rectam conscientiam statui queat, interventu communionis effici unionem Christi nobiscum essentialem?*". *Nolumus hic controversare cum aliis, nisi cum solo Weigelio, qui putat, ex communione, h. e., usu coenae Domini, qua mediante pane corpus Christi, mediante calice eiusdem sanguis distribuatur, sequi essentialem corporis et sanguinis nostri cum corpore et sanguine Christi coniunctionem. Placeat propria illius audire verba. ... Clarissime mentem explicat part. I. postillae suae, p. 214: "Christ", he says, "does not give us the bread of heaven in faith alone, spiritually without bread and wine, but also in the supper with bread and wine; not that the visible bread and wine are Christ's body and blood, but in them he is given to us. For the bread of heaven is his Word, and he is the Word, and the Word is in the bread, and this invisible bread from heaven, or the Word becomes flesh and blood in us, and takes hold of our flesh and blood. Therefore, when we receive such food of remembrance, we are united to Christ's crucified body and are united to him bodily." [[Google](#)] ... Haec Weigelii assertio ita comparata est, ut bona cum conscientia nullum ei possimus praebere assensum propter sequentes rationes: 1. Quod nullum habet fundamentum in Scriptura. ... Ubi enim Christus dixit: Accipite et bibite, ut corpus et sanguis meus in communem vobiscum transmutetur substantiam? Ubi dixit: Accipite, edite et bibite; haec sumta et hausta efficient in vobis communem mecum essentiam? Ubi dixit: Edite; hic*

est panis invisibilis de coelo, ex quo in vobis fiet caro et sanguis et agglutinabitur vestrae carni ac sanguini? Ubi dixit: Edite, ut crucifixo meo corpori substantialiter uniamini? ... 2. Id in sacramento nobis confertur, quod in verbo promissum est. Nam sacramenta sunt verbi sigilla, sigilla autem non plus confirmant, quam literae, quibus appensa sunt, continent. At verbis Scripturae nusquam nobis promissum est, quod, vel intra communionem, vel extra eam, Christum nobiscum essentialiter uniri debeat. [Google]...

3. Si communicantes nudo coenae Domini usu uniuntur Christo essentialiter, etiam impii huius unionis reddentur participes. Ratio est, quia et illi utuntur coena Domini, eaque integra. Nam nihil interest, cum de sacramenti integritate et sanctitate tractatur, quid credat aut quali fide imbutus sit ille, qui accipit sacramentum. Interest quidem plurimum ad salutis viam, sed ad sacramenti quaestionem nihil interest. Fieri enim potest, ut homo integrum habeat sacramentum, et perversam fidem, inquit Aug. 1. 3. contra Donat, c. 14; vide eundem 1. 4. c. 24. At consequens est absurdum. Etenim hac ratione 1. coadunarentur essentia purissima et impurissima, Filius Dei et filius diaboli, Christus et Belial, contra manifestam Scripturam, 2 Cor. 6, 15. ... [Google] Dices, an igitur praeter spiritualem non erit statuenda sacramentalis quaedam unio inter Christum et fideles, fluens ex participatione corporis et sanguinis Christi? Sunt, qui ita statuunt etiam ex nostratibus, dari talem sacramentalem unionem, quae promanet vi et efficacia communionis et tam dignis, quam indignis aequae communis sit? ... Mihi, ut dicam quod res est, aliter videtur et hoc salva veritate nec asseri nec defendi posse existimo: I. quia hoc modo terminus unionis in manifestum abusum trahitur. Nam unio sacramentalis simpliciter hactenus dicta fuit illa, quae intercedit rei terrena cum coelesti, ex qua etiam deductae fuere propositiones sacramentales, uti personales ex unione personali. Tam nova accederet sacramentalis unio, quam tamen Scriptura prorsus ignorat, nec ullum eius fundamentum suppeditat. Paulus sane 1 Cor. 10, 16. 17. duplicis saltem communionis facit mentionem, quae locum habet vi eucharistiae: [Google] 1. sacramentalis, spectantis symbola euchar. collata cum re coelesti; 2. mysticae, quae spectat corpus Christi mysticum, eiusque membra; uti vero hypocritae corporis illius mystici membra non sunt, nisi aequivoe, ita putandum non est, proprie dictam aliquam unionem, ex eucharistia oriundam, eosdem spectare aut ipsis cum Christo intercedere, sive illa iam sacramentalis vocitetur, sive aliter. II. Unio illa sacramentalis, sicunde potest ortum trahere, faciet id, nonnisi ex manducatione corporis et bibitione sanguinis. At aliud est, impios manducare corpus Christi et bibere sanguinem Christi, aliud, eosdem uniri cum Christo mystice vi sacramenti. Illud necessario admittimus ob unionem vere sacramentalem, quae intercedit inter rem terrestrem et coelestem, et ab auctoritate instituentis, non a conditione manducantis dependet. [Google] Hoc contra necessario reiicimus ob deficientem conditionem, a manducante et bibente requisitam, quae est fides. In quem itaque non cadit fides, ad illum etiam effectus sacramenti salutaris, cuius circulo etiam includi debet unio cum Christo, nullatenus spectare potest, idque nisi concesserimus, sequetur, eucharistiae

baptism is a means of rebirth, λοντρόν παλιγγενεσίας και ἀνακαινώσεως πνεύματος αγίου,⁵¹³⁾ so certainly does the word of the gospel work regeneration, ἀναγεγεννημένοι ... διά λόγου ζώντος Θεοῦ.⁵¹⁴⁾ And as certain as it is that in the Lord's Supper Christ gives not merely images of his body and blood, but body and blood itself,⁵¹⁵⁾ it is equally certain that he does not name as the purpose of this miraculous gift any special physical effect, but only the assurance or testimony that God is gracious to the eaters and drinkers for the sake of the body given and the blood shed of Christ. Otherwise the words cannot be understood: το σώμά μου το ὑπερ υμῶν διδόμενον' τοῦτο ποιείτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν;⁵¹⁷⁾ So also the Lutheran Confessions teaches. It emphasizes with great emphasis that the sacraments have no other end purpose than the word of the

tribuendum effectum aliquem salutarem ex opere operato sine bono motu utentis; quae sententia scholasticorum quorundam veterum ab ipsis etiam novellis Iesuitis ut plurimum deseritur. III Obstat instituta collatio cum baptismo adutorum. Quem, quaeso, spirituale effectum habet ille fidelibus et hypocritis communem? Nullum plane, qui quidem salutem respiciat; sed externam solum communionem ecclesiae, quod utrique per baptismum intra ecclesiae pomaeria sint recepti. Eadem et hic ratio est et non alia. Negare quidem non possumus, patres de effectu eucharistiae interdum duriuscule fuisse locutos, ... nam multa sic sunt comparata, ut facile ad ipsos hypocritas possint detorqueri, sed talia cum grano salis legi debent. [[Google](#)]

513) Tit. 3:5 514) 1 Pet. 1:23

515) More details under the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

516) Luke 22:19. Luther X, 2188: "I hope it is not necessary to teach here at length what this means, Christ's remembrance, of which we have taught elsewhere often and much, namely, that it is not the contemplation of suffering, so that some as with a good work want to serve God and have obtained grace, go around mourning for the bitter suffering of Christ, etc., but this is Christ's remembrance, so that one teaches and believes the power and fruit of his suffering. So that our works and merit are nothing, free will being dead and lost, but by Christ's suffering and death alone we are loosed from sins and become godly, that it is a doctrine or memorial of the grace of God in Christ, and not a work done by us."

517) Matt. 26:28. Luther XX, 275: [[Am. Ed. 40, 214](#)]: "Therefore this Luther has rightly taught that whoever has an evil conscience from sins should go to the sacrament and take comfort, not in the bread and wine, not in the body and blood of Christ, but in the Word, which in the sacrament offers, presents, and gives me the body and blood of Christ as given and shed for me."

Gospel, namely the testimony and presentation of the forgiveness of sins and the awakening and strengthening of faith in the forgiveness of sins. The Apology says: "The true sacraments are baptism and the Lord's Supper, absolution. For these have God's command, have also the promise of grace, which actually belongs to the New Testament and is the New Testament. For this is the purpose of the outward signs, that by them the hearts may be moved, that is, by the word and outward signs at the same time, that they may believe when we are baptized, when we receive the body of the Lord, that God will be truly gracious through Christ, as Paul says: 'Faith is of the hearing.' But as the word enters the ears, so the outward sign is set before the eyes, to stir up and move the heart inwardly to faith. For the word and the outward sign have the same effect in the heart, as Augustine spoke a fine word. The sacrament, he says, is a visible word. For the outward sign is a painting, by which is signified the same thing that is preached by the word; therefore both effect one thing, *est quasi pictura verbi, idem significans quod verbum. Quare idem est utriusque effectus.*" [[Trigl. 308, 4-5](#) [🔗](#)] Likewise, the purpose of the sacraments in the Augsburg Confession is determined "that they are signs and testimonies of divine will toward us, to awaken and strengthen our faith thereby, *ut sint signa et testimonia voluntatis Dei erga nos ad excitandam et confirmandam fidem in his, qui utuntur, proposita.*"⁵¹⁸⁾ This terminology of the Augsburg Confession, that the sacraments are "signs and testimonies of the divine" (*sci.* gracious) "will toward us" and therefore awaken and strengthen faith, is based on the general objective reconciliation and is to be recognized as classical.

Newer Lutherans should never have raised the objection that the value of the sacraments is degraded if their purpose is taught to be only the communication and confirmation of the forgiveness of sins. For first of all, the purpose of the sacraments is God's business, who has ordained them, and it does not behoove us men to then subvert the divine purpose with supposed improvements

518) Art. XIII M., p. 41 [[Trigl. 49, XIII](#) [🔗](#)]

Then the situation is that the forgiveness of sins is the real and "main good", "the new testament", so that no man is short of the forgiveness of sins. The Scriptures place in succession to the forgiveness of sins all the other spiritual goods and effects which Christians receive: the state of grace, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the *unio mystica*, sanctification, love of God and neighbor, membership in the Christian Church, and the privileges connected therewith.⁵¹⁹⁾ If we therefore leave it at the divine purpose of the sacraments, that they are media of the forgiveness of sins and thereby also media of the revival and strengthening of faith, then the reception of all other goods and gifts is also guaranteed with it. Specifically, the resurrection of the body on the Last Day is also ensured. The human idea of planting the resurrection body by partaking of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper is unnecessary. To all who believe the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, the resurrection of the body is guaranteed by the divine promise,⁵²⁰⁾ even if they have not partaken of Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper because of certain circumstances, such as the faithful children within the Lutheran Church and the believers in Christ in the Reformed fellowships.⁵²¹⁾ Luther has also been invoked for a physical communication of the resurrection body through the Lord's Supper. To be sure, Luther teaches that the hope of the resurrection of the body is also strengthened by the Lord's Supper. But he does not let this happen by the fact that a physical effect is set on the body of the Christian by the bodily eating with the mouth, but by the fact that the Christian binds the spiritual with the bodily eating, namely the faith in the word of absolution: "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." Luther writes: "Of course, no one can chase the words through the throat into the belly, but must grasp them through the ears into the heart. But what does he grasp in

519) [Vol. II, 483 ff.](#)

520) Joh. 5:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you: He who hears my word and believes him who sent me, ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον καὶ εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται ἀλλὰ μεταβέβηκεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωὴν. Likewise John 11:25-26: ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ, καὶ ἀποθάνῃ, ζήσεται ... ὃν μὴ ἀποθάνῃ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

521) Luther, [St. L. XVII, 2212](#).

his heart through the words? Nothing else, but that they read, namely, "the body given for us," which is the spiritual food. And we have further said that whoever eats the sacrament bodily without such words or without such spiritual food, it is not only of no use, but also harmful, as Paul says 1 Cor. 11:27: "Whoever eats bread unworthily is guilty of the Lord's body. Therefore you should not have taught us that bodily eating is not useful." To this Luther adds the thought that the Christian may also have the hope that Christ will raise up on the Last Day the body which he has here on earth honored to come into fellowship with his body through bodily eating in the Lord's Supper. Luther adds: "The mouth that eats Christ's flesh does not know what it eats or what the heart eats; it would be of no use to the mouth itself, for it cannot grasp or hear the words. But the heart knows well what the mouth eats. For it grasps the words and eats spiritually what the mouth eats bodily. But because the mouth is the member of the heart, it" (the mouth and thus also the whole body) "must finally also live forever for the sake of the heart, which lives forever through the word, because here also it eats bodily the same eternal food which its heart eats spiritually with it."

It is also by no means an innocent speculation if we also ascribe to themselves a physical effect to the sacraments. We thus fall into the Roman camp, namely into the doctrine of a sacramental effect ex opere operato sine bono motu utentis. We lose ourselves in a communication of grace without the taking hand of faith on the part of man. The saving grace is then no longer conceived as forgiveness of sins or *favor Dei propter Christ*, but as infusion of a substance of grace. The forgiveness of sins and faith or, which is the same thing, justification by faith is then set aside and thus Christianity is touched in its foundation. This is the reason why the Lutheran Confessions so firmly insists that *idem effectus* of the Word of God and the sacraments, namely the presentation of the gracious disposition of God and the revival and strengthening of faith, be held fast. Therefore, the Confession adds the following polemical

522) St. L. XX, 831.

remarks: "We must freely condemn all the *scholasticorum* and rebuke their error in teaching that those who use the sacraments badly, if they do not set a hindrance [*obicem*], obtain God's grace *ex opere operato*, if the heart then has no good thought. But this is a Jewish error, if they think that we should become justified and holy by a work and an outward ceremony without faith, and if the heart is not already there. And yet this pernicious doctrine is preached and taught far and wide, absolutely and everywhere throughout the whole papal kingdom and papal church. Paul cries out against it, saying that Abraham was not justified before God by circumcision, but that circumcision was a sign to exercise and strengthen faith. Therefore we also say that to the right use of the sacraments belongs faith, who believes the divine promise and receives promised grace, which is offered through sacrament and words. And this is a certain, right custom of the holy sacraments, since a heart and a conscience may dare and allow themselves. For no one can grasp the divine promise except by faith alone, ... and we are addressing here faith, since I myself certainly believe for myself that my sins are forgiven, not only *fide generali*, since I believe that there is a God. The same right use of the sacraments is quite comforting and refreshes the conscience. But as for the ugly, shameful, ungodly doctrine of the *opere operato*, since they teach that if I use the sacraments, the work done makes me pious before God and obtains me grace, although the heart has no good thought for it, introduced for abuse and error, no one can think enough, write enough, nor say enough. For that is where the unspeakable, innumerable, horrible abuse of the Mass came from. ... Augustine says straight against it that faith in the use of the sacrament, not the sacrament before God, makes us pious." ⁵²³⁾

Nor should this objection ever have been raised as to the necessity of offering and confirming the same forgiveness of sins to Christians in several ways. Scripture and experience teach that nothing is more difficult for men who have recognized their sins than to believe that their sins are forgiven. Thus, the repeated and manifold testimony corresponds to


523) The Apology 204, 18-23. [[Trigl. 313, Apol., XIII, 18-23](#) 

the forgiveness of sins through the means of grace to a practical need of Christians. The Lutheran confession also draws attention to this: "The gospel does not give one way, counsel and help against sin; for God is abundantly rich in his grace. First, through the oral word, in which forgiveness of sins is preached in all the world, which is the actual ministry of the gospel. Second, through Baptism. Third, through the Holy Sacrament of the Altar. Fourth, through the power of the Keys and also per mutuum colloquium et consolationem fratrum, Matt. 18: Ubi duo fuerint congregati." ⁵²⁴⁾

The number of sacraments. ^


There is no need to argue about the number of sacraments before there is agreement on the concept of sacrament. It is not only ungodly but also foolish for the Council of Trent to curse all who accept "either more or less than seven" sacraments.⁵²⁵⁾ The number of sacraments depends on

524) Smalc. Art. 319. art. IV. [[Trigl. 491, Part III, Art. IV](#) ,] Of the Gospel.

525) Trident, *Sess. VII, can. 1* — The Apology, p. 204, 17 [[Trigl. 313, XIII, 17](#) ,], speaks Christianly and reasonably about the number of sacraments: "No man of understanding will make a great quarrel whether seven or more sacraments be counted, but so far that God's Word and command be not broken off." But it is precisely the latter — the abrogation of the divine word and command and the establishment of her own power — that Rome is concerned with in decreeing the seven number of sacraments, as is evident from the characterization of the Roman sacraments that follows below. — On the use of the word "sacrament" in various meanings in the state and in the Church cf. [Gerhard, De sacramentis, § 3 sqq.](#) The discussion of the derivation and use of the word among heathens and Christians is, of course, of no value in answering the question whether and to what extent baptism and the Lord's Supper are means of grace. Because this is not a designation prescribed in Scripture, but a church expression (*vox ecclesiastica*), we use the word sacrament in Christian freedom (cf. Luther v. Carlstadt [XX, 205 ff.](#)) to designate such acts as have God's command, divine external signs, and the promise of the forgiveness of sins. In this sense then we say that only Baptism and the Lord's Supper are sacraments of the New Testament. — [Gerhard, L. de sacramentis, § 5](#): *Quamvis vox sacramenti in latina biblicorum versione occurrat, proprie tamen et specificè non usurpatur de externis illis ac visibilibus invisibilis gratiae signis, de quibus hoc loco agimus, sed a scriptoribus ecclesiasticis ad ea demum translata est.* [[Google](#)] — On the fluctuating use of the word "sacrament" [Luthardt, Dogm.,¹¹ pp. 387 ff.](#) Cf. [Hauck, RE.² XIII, 264 ff.](#); [Kattenbusch, RE.³ XVII, 349 ff.](#); [Nitzsch — Stephan, Ev. Dogm. p. 642 ff.](#)

depends on how the term "sacrament" is determined. If we understand by sacrament an action which has not only God's command and the promise of the forgiveness of sins, but also a visible element prescribed by God, then there are only two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Apology also includes absolution among the sacraments, not including the visible God-ordained element in the term "sacrament," but defining the sacraments as "*ritus, qui habent mandatum Dei, et quibus addita est promissio gratiae*."⁵²⁶⁾ This concept also applies to absolution. Besides, The Apology also draws attention to the narrower concept of sacraments and then counts only two sacraments, baptism and supper.⁵²⁷⁾ The Romans and Greeks count seven sacraments, namely, besides baptism and the Lord's Supper, confirmation, penance, last rites, ordination, and marriage. For what the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Catholic Church understand by confirmation,⁵²⁸⁾ penance,⁵²⁹⁾ last rites⁵³⁰⁾ and priestly ordination⁵³¹⁾, lacks the *mandatum Dei*.


526) M. 202, 4. [[Trigl. 309, XIII, 4](#) 

527) op. cit.. Luther in Large Catechism, M. 485, 1. [[Trigl. 733, 1](#), 

528) Trident, Sess. VII, *De confirm. can.* 1. 2. on the infancy of the spiritual relationship between the confirming and the confirmed *Sess. XXIV, De reform. matrimonii, cap. 2.* on the character *indelebilis Sess. XXIII, De sacramento ordinis, cap.* On the confirmation of children, as a laudable church, not divine, order, cf. Walther, [Pastorale, p. 261 ff.](#)

529) By repentance, the Romans do not understand the repentance commanded in Scripture, which includes repentance and faith, but the three human works *contritio cordis* (self-made meritorious repentance), *confessio oris* (auricular confession) and *satisfactio* (works of repentance imposed by the priest), about the anti-Christian abomination of Roman repentance Vol. [II, pp. 563 f., 605.](#)

530) Trident, Sess. XIV, *De sacram, extr. unet.* Smets, p. 75 f. — The anointing with oil, of which Mark. 6:13 is addressed was a miraculous gift for the healing of bodily diseases. James speaks of the common anointing for the refreshment and strengthening of the body in ch. 5:14 and attributes the healing not to the anointing but to the prayer of faith.

531) Trident, Sess. XXIII, *De sacr. ordinis.* Ordination to the priesthood is to be an act which only the bishop can perform, imprinting an indelible character and conferring the power to offer the body and blood of Christ. — According to Christian doctrine, however, the calling of doctrinally competent persons into the public teaching office instituted by Christ has divine command. But the public separation of these persons under certain ceremonies is only apostolic church order. The Apology 203, 7-13 [[Trigl. 311, 7-13](#) ]: "The adversaries understand priesthood not of the ministry of the Word, and administering

Marriage is of divine order, but it does not have the promise of the forgiveness of sins, but the promise of the procreation of the human generation.⁵³²⁾

The erroneous doctrines of the means of grace. ^

We repeat first of all: The doctrines of the means of grace of church fellowships or individuals correspond each time to their doctrine of the atoning work of Christ. Any deduction that one allows oneself to make from the Scriptural doctrine of the perfect reconciliation of the world of men through the vicarious satisfaction of Christ also makes the Scriptural doctrine of the means of grace impossible from the outset. The means of grace cease to be *media iustificationis* and become means of stimulation for such inner and outer transformations in man and such achievements on the part of man, by which man is made wholly or at least decisively his own reconciler.

The Means of Grace Doctrine of the Roman Church. ^

The Roman church teaches that Christ acquired grace for man. The doctrine that man becomes justified and saved "without divine grace through Christ" is expressly rejected.⁵³³⁾ Calvinism, which limits the grace of God in Christ to a part of man, is also rejected.⁵³⁴⁾ But Rome wants the grace acquired by Christ to be understood in such a way that it moves God to infuse so much grace, that is, sanctification and good works, into man (*gratia infusa*), and indeed to infuse it with the constant cooperation of man⁵³⁵⁾ that man is enabled to truly earn justification and salvation for himself (*vere mereri*),⁵³⁶⁾ either *de congruo* [according to fairness or liberality] or

the Sacraments to others, but they understand it as referring to sacrifice. . . . But if ordination be understood as applying to the ministry of the Word, we are not unwilling to call ordination a sacrament. For the ministry of the Word has God's command and glorious promises."

532) Apology 204, 15 [[Trigl. 311, 15](#) [Q](#)]: "If the marriage state alone should be called a sacrament because God has instituted and commanded it, then the other offices and states should also be called sacraments, which also go by the Word of God and command, as a supremacy or magistrate."

533) Trident, *Sess. VI, can. 1. 2. 3. 10. 22.*

534) Trident, *Sess. VI, can. 17.*

535) Trident, *Sess. VI, can. 4.* 536) Trident, *Sess. VI, can. 32.*

de condigno [by actual meriti]. According to Roman doctrines, Christ has earned so much grace for men that they can earn salvation for themselves. Therefore, according to Roman doctrine, the means of grace are not the means by which God offers the forgiveness of sins and the salvation fully acquired by Christ to faith for acceptance, and by such presentation also causes faith in man and, if it is already present, strengthens it, but means to stimulate and support such efforts of virtue in man under Roman direction, by which man gradually and to an ever higher degree⁵³⁷⁾ turns to himself the grace of God. However, since — as Rome itself points out — the striving for virtue remains piecemeal, except for a small elite, and yet the forgiveness of sins or justification is supposed to depend on this *gratia infusa*, the means of grace become means to keep man uncertain about divine grace. According to the Council of Trent, it is part of true piety that the Christian, if he has not received a special revelation from God, remains in doubt as to the attainment of divine grace.⁵³⁸⁾ But because doubt is the opposite of faith and excludes from the forgiveness of sins, in the hands of Rome the means of grace become means by which men are effectively kept from the grace and salvation available through Christ. Instead, they are bound to the orders of the Papacy, which presents itself with its institutions as the mediator of grace. The mischief of the crusades, pilgrimages, indulgences, monastic life, etc., served and serve to keep men from the grace which Christ has acquired and dispenses through the word of the gospel and the sacraments. The Roman multiplication of the sacraments also serves this purpose. By its many sacraments, which are not all of equal importance, but are nevertheless necessary for salvation,⁵³⁹⁾ Rome takes the forgiveness of sins acquired by Christ for men under lock and key, because, as Winer rightly notes, it does not understand by saving grace the grace of the forgiveness of sins, which is taken by faith and thus is

537) Trident, *Sess.* VI, cap. 16, can. 32.

538) Trident, *Sess.* VI, cap. 9 and can. 13.

539) Trident, *Sess.* VII, can. 3. 4.

certain to man, but the infusion of good qualities, which, however, are not to be trusted after all.⁵⁴⁰⁾ That Rome understands the grace conveyed by the sacraments to be the infusion of a substance of grace is also evident from the assertion that the sacraments make man partake of grace even without faith on his part. It is self-evident that all the communications of grace ascribed to the sacraments *sine bono motu utentis* are in the realm of the imagination, and in any case do not belong to the Christian religion, because according to Scripture all Christian virtues occur only as a consequence and effect of faith, which grasps forgiveness for the sake of Christ's merit alone.

The Means of Grace Doctrine of the Calvinist Reformed. [^]

Since, according to the doctrines of the Calvinist Reformed, saving grace in Christ is particular, there are no means of grace for the part of men to whom God's grace and Christ's merit do not extend. Rather, for this part of men, the means of grace have the purpose of being means of condemnation, as Calvin expressly teaches: "There is a general calling by which God, by means of the outward sermon of the Word, invites all alike to himself, even those to whom he takes the same to be a savor of death, and as a matter of grave condemnation."⁵⁴¹⁾ If Calvin nevertheless speaks of means of grace also with respect to the rejected, saying that they earn damnation twice over by despising the grace offered to them as well, then this belongs to the

540) Winer, *Komparative Darstellung* 3, p. 117: "Although the sacraments of the Roman as well as those of the Evangelical Church are means of grace, both differ again in the determination of the grace which the sacraments convey; namely, the Evangelical Church teaches that the grace of forgiveness of sins is offered through the sacraments. At the same time, she describes as their effect the revival and strengthening of faith." (That this is true only of the Lutheran Church, not of the Reformed Church, will be clear from what follows). "The Roman Church, on the other hand, regards the sacraments in general as channels through which sanctifying and justifying grace" (i.e., *gratia infusa*) "flows in its rich manifoldness."

541) *Inst. III, 24, 8: Est universalis vocatio, qua per externam verbi praedicationem omnes pariter ad se invitat Deus, etiam quibus eam in mortis odorem et gravioris condemnationis materiam proponit.* [[Google](#)]

self-contradictions in which Calvinist theology moves in the doctrine of appropriation and rejection of salvation.⁵⁴²⁾ Consequently, the Calvinists cannot address the contempt of grace on the part of the rejected because, according to their doctrines, there is no grace for these unfortunates, and thus it cannot be contemptuous of them either. This obvious self-contradiction has been rightly pointed out in ancient and modern times.⁵⁴³⁾ In short, according to the Calvinist doctrine that there is no grace and no merit of Christ for a part of men, there is also no means of grace for this part of men. Where Calvin and his comrades still speak of means of grace even to the *reprobi* and *impii* and ascribe to them a contempt for God's grace, there is an accommodation to the language of Scripture and of the Christian church, for which, if the doctrine of *gratia particularis* is upheld, there is no factual justification.

But the Calvinist Reformed also have no means of grace for the elect. Calvin explicitly instructs the believers to judge of their election not according to the external word, namely not according to the *universalis vocatio*, which is through the external word (*per externam praedicationem*), but according to the 'special calling' (*specialis vocatio*), which consists in the inner illumination of the Holy Spirit. And this is completely consistent from Calvin's point of view. Believers cannot know their election from the external word of the gospel, because in Calvin's opinion God invites through the external word not only the elect, but also those to whom he has given the

542) See the detailed evidence II, 25 st.

543) Thus, e.g., von Gerhard, *L. de elect*, § 68, quoted II, 51. Steitz-Hauck, RE.² XIII, 294: "The believers are, according to the context of his [Calvin's] system, the elect, the predestined; only these experience (*Inst. III, 24, 15* and especially *Consens. Tigur., c. 16*) the inward power of the Spirit and receive, besides the signs, also the *res* or *virtus sacramenti*. Therefore, it is basically only an empty phrase when he says that the promise is also offered to the unbeliever; indeed, it sounds like irony when he calls out to the latter: You must only take hold in faith of the word that is instituted in the sign, in order to have the thing [the effect] with the sign." If Steitz-Hauck, in passing, think that Calvin teaches an "objectivity of the means of grace" insofar as he, as a determinist, does not grant any justification to "subjectivity", it must be remembered that by "objectivity" of the means of grace one usually understands the nature of the means of grace, according to which God, through the means of grace, offers the forgiveness of sins to all who use them without distinction and is effective in all for the effect, respectively the strengthening of faith.

invitation to a stench of death and as a matter of grave condemnation. Thus there is nothing left for the *pii* or *electi* but to abandon the external word of the gospel, because this can be a calling to damnation as well as to salvation, and to withdraw to the special calling or the inner illumination of the Holy Spirit (*interior Spiritus illuminatio*). According to Calvinist doctrine, however, this "inner illumination" of the elect does not take place through the external means of grace, but through the direct action of the Holy Spirit. This is also sharpened very decidedly by more recent Reformers. In Hodge we find statements like this: "In the work of regeneration all second causes are excluded." "Nothing intervenes between the volition of the Spirit and the regeneration of the soul." "The infusion of a new life into the soul is the immediate work of the Spirit." "The truth [in the case of adults]" — meaning the presentation of the truth of the gospel through the external word — "attends the work of regeneration, but is not the means by which it is effected."⁵⁴⁴ Thus, consistent Calvinism *minus* means of grace is also in regard to the elect, first as to the presentation of God's gracious will, and therefore second as to the origin of saving faith and the effect of regeneration. How could faith and with it the rebirth to spiritual life come into being through a word which, according to Calvinist doctrines, is highly ambiguous, and which, according to divine intention, can convey both wrath and grace! One cannot allow oneself such a tremendous encroachment on divine revelation as is present in the denial of *gratia universalis*, and yet still retain the divine ordered means of grace. With the denial of *gratia universalis*, consequently, the means of grace also disappear. The fact that there are means of grace which are "signs and testimonies" (*signa et testimonia*) of God's gracious will toward us and therefore also awaken and strengthen faith through the action of the Holy Spirit,⁵⁴⁵ has as a necessary prerequisite the fact that the whole human world, not excluding any individual, is reconciled to God through Christ's *satisfactio vicaria*. It is therefore only an accommodation

544) [Systematic Theology II, 684 sq.](#)

545) Augsburg Confession, [Art XIII](#) and [V](#).

to the language of Scripture and the church environment when the Calvinist Reformed call the Word and the sacraments "signs," "symbols," "seals" (*signa, symbola, tesserae, sigilla*) of divine grace.⁵⁴⁶ Provided that they really hold fast the *gratia particularis*, they lack the factual justification for this use of language. For in this case — namely, when the *gratia particularis* is held fast — word and sacrament can just as well be signs of wrath as of grace. Ambiguous signs, however, are not signs at all, but leave the thing to be signified *in dubio*. But they are also not signs for the "*interior illuminatio*" of the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit supposedly does not work this interior illumination through the external means of grace, but directly.

In the denial of *gratia universalis* and the assumption that faith arises through direct divine action, the scriptural concept of saving faith and saving grace cannot be upheld. Faith that does not come from the external word of the gospel is not faith in the scriptural sense. Faith in the sense of Scripture always arises and exists only *vis-a-vis* its correlate, that is, the Word of the Gospel.⁵⁴⁷ Faith, which, detached from its object, is supposed to come into being by the immediate effect of divine power, is infused feeling into man, and the saving grace is no longer the gracious disposition of God in Christ' (*favor Dei propter Christ*), but becomes *gratia infusa*, a good quality infused into man. Walking externally different paths, Rome and the Calvinistic Reformed meet again at the point of *gratia infusa*. According to the Roman conception, saving grace is a stream that pours into man by way of the multiform Roman means of grace, if man " does not place an

546) *Conf. Helv. II, c. 19: Sunt sacramenta symbola mystica — quibus [Deus] promissiones suas obsignat, et quae ipse nobis interius praestat, exterius repraesentat ac veluti oculis contemplanda subiicit adeoque fidem nostram, Spiritu Dei in cordibus nostris operante, roborat et auget, quibus denique nos ab omnibus aliis populis et religionibus separat sibi soli consecrat et obligat et quid a nobis requirat, significat. — Conf. Belgica, art. 33: Sunt sacramenta signa ac symbola visibilia rerum internarum et invisibilium, per quae, ceu per media, Deus ipse virtute Spiritus Sancti in nobis operatur.* [Google]

547) Rom. 10:14; Mark. 1:15; 16:15-16.

obstacle in its way" (*obicem non ponit*). According to the Calvinist view, saving grace is a stream that does not pour into the soul through external means of grace, but directly and therefore *irresistibly* (as *gratia irresistibilis*). Both conceive *gratia salvifica* not as divine mercy or God's gracious disposition in Christ, but as a good quality instilled in man. It is true that the Calvinistic Reformed often define saving grace quite correctly as God's gracious disposition in Christ or as the forgiveness of sins,⁵⁴⁸⁾ but by the denial of common grace and by the consequent denial of the attribution of grace through the Word of God and the sacraments, they are driven into the Roman fairway of "infused grace" as the foundation of the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, they also have the same trouble with their "grace" as the Romans. The *gratia infusa* or "the inner enlightenment" proves to be an imperfect quantity in practice and is subject to change. We recall again the example of Oliver Cromwell.⁵⁴⁹⁾ For the awakened conscience, the *gratia infusa*, because of its imperfection, is not a cause of reassurance but of disquiet. It is in this embarrassment that the theory of infallible faith has been inserted into the Calvinistic system, by which faith in the gracious disposition of God is once more detached from the means of grace and placed upon itself, namely, founded upon its supposed or real former existence. Thus it is a fact that consistent Calvinism, with its denial of universal objective reconciliation, leaves no room for the Scriptural doctrine of the means of grace. That there is in practice among the Calvinistic Reformed a happy inconsistency with respect to this point, and that, against Calvin's warning, one nevertheless bases faith on the *universalis vocatio* and thus on the external word which promises grace to all men, has already been repeatedly admitted. Schneckenburger has also pointed out that especially in the counseling of those who think they have committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, the Reformed practice, if it wants to be successful, must place itself on the Lutheran standpoint.⁵⁵⁰⁾

548) II, 10, note 27. 549) p. 108.

550) Comparative account I, 260 ff.

The Synergists' Means of Grace Doctrine. [^]

We have seen that the biblical doctrine of the means of grace is dismissed by the Calvinist denial of *gratia universalis*. The same is done by the synergistic denial of *sola gratia*, according to which faith in the gospel or conversion to God does not come about solely through God's action of grace, but also depends on the right conduct of man. All, namely, who ascribe to man a participation in conversion or in the origin of faith, by making faith come about through human "self-decision," "self-determination," "self-settlement," "right conduct," "refrain from willful resistance," a "position of neutrality," etc. All these do not understand the means of grace as the means by which God offers the grace acquired from Christ, that is, the forgiveness of sins, and by such presentation causes faith without human participation, but as the means by which man, in order to become a partaker of grace, is stimulated (*excitatur*) to a performance on his part, namely, to the things just mentioned and similar things: To personal self-setting or self-determination, to right conduct, to the position of neutrality, to the right use of the "freedom left him by grace," to "own decisive choice," to the exercise of "free moral agency," etc. In short, to the synergists in all shades the means of grace are not merely mediators of God's grace available through Christ's *satisfactio vicaria*, but means of stimulation to a differently named human achievement, through which man can and should first come into possession of divine grace. Therefore we find also among the Synergists, whether they are in the Reformed or Lutheran camp, the explicit explanation that the means of grace are not sufficient for the attainment of grace and salvation. The Arminians, who may be regarded as a type of the Reformed synergists, expressly call the grace offered and effective in the means of grace a "partial power" (*vis partialis*), which remains without effect without the cooperation of the human will (*non posse exire [vim gratiae] in actum sine cooperatione liberae voluntatis humanae ac proinde ut effectum habeat pendere a libera voluntate*). [[Google](#)]⁵⁵¹⁾ In the same sense, the later Melancthon and his followers were not

551) Apol. Conf. Remonstr., p. 162; in Winer, [Kompar. Darst.](#)³, p. 81 f.

content with two causes of conversion, the Word of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit, that is, the means of grace, but they added as a third cause "the consenting and not resisting human will." (*humana voluntas assentiens nec repugnans verbo Dei*).⁵⁵²⁾ In our time the opinion that the grace offered and efficacious in the means of grace is not sufficient for conversion and salvation has been expressed thus: "According to the revealed order of salvation the actual final result of the means of grace depends not only on the sufficiency and efficacy of the means themselves, but also upon the conduct of man in regard to the necessary condition of passiveness and submissiveness under the Gospel-call." ⁵⁵³⁾ Synergism, then, really degrades the means of grace, whose character is that they offer God's grace in Christ for free, *χωρίς έργων νόμου*, and thereby bring forth and strengthen faith, into means of stimulation for such human performances as are to determine God to bestow upon individual men the forgiveness of sins. Admittedly, not all, like Luthardt,⁵⁵⁴⁾ explicitly call faith a human achievement. Nor do all, like Seeberg,⁵⁵⁵⁾ speak of a "personal self-establishment" or, like Keyser,⁵⁵⁶⁾ of an actuation of "free moral agency" to bring about man's communion of grace with God. Most popular in the synergistic camp is probably the representation that the granting of divine grace depends on the "different", that is, "right behavior" of man. In order for the means of grace to be successful, only the "necessary condition of passiveness and submissiveness" must be added on the human side. But the meaning of the different ways of speaking is that the grace offered and effective in the means of grace is not sufficient to make man actually partake of the divine grace. "If man's conversion depended in no sense on anything but grace, and likewise ... on the means of grace, all would be converted and saved." ⁵⁵⁷⁾ It stands with the denial of *sola gratia* as with

552) *Loci*, ed. Detzer, I, 72 sqq.

553) *Luth. standard*, February 28, 1891.

554) *Dogmatik*¹¹, p. 284. 555) RE. ³ II, 544.

556) *Election and Conversion*, p. 67.

557) *Kirchenzeitung*, April 18, 1891.

the denial of the *universalis gratia*. One cannot allow oneself such a gross encroachment on the biblical doctrine as is present in the denial of *sola gratia* and yet still retain the means of grace ordered by God. With the denial of *sola gratia*, the scriptural concept of the means of grace also disappears. Therefore, it is only an accommodation to the church usage when the representatives of synergism still address means of grace. With regard to the character of the means of grace, it is to be noted: The means of grace ordered by God are not law, but gospel, pure, unadulterated gospel conditioned by no human achievement or good nature. Therefore, they do not require from man self-determination, self-establishment, a position of neutrality, self-decision for or against grace, right conduct, or any other human achievement, but only faith. Luther says: "Evangelium is Greek and means in German a joyful message, because in it the salutary doctrine of life from divine promise is proclaimed and grace and forgiveness of sin are offered. Therefore, the gospel does not require work, for it is not law, but faith alone, for it is a mere promise and offer of divine grace. He therefore that believeth on it receiveth grace and the Holy Spirit." ⁵⁵⁸⁾ And this faith, which is merely receiving (*medium ληπτικόν*, *infrumentat*) and "belongs to the Gospel," the Holy Spirit works through the Gospel itself, without human cooperation, "in those who hear the Gospel",⁵⁵⁹⁾ for faith comes from the sermon.⁵⁶⁰⁾ — The synergistic notion of the means of grace is also exceedingly dangerous. A "gospel" which supposedly includes human self-setting, right conduct, self-decision for or against grace, as it is not a gospel, so it also does not produce the Christian faith "which builds on pure grace," but nourishes a trust in one's own strength and ability, which effectively closes itself off against the grace presented and effective in the means of grace. As long as a man stands in the delusion that he himself can or must do something to attain grace, he will not attain grace.⁵⁶¹⁾ Faith in grace is not something that one carefully considers beforehand, taking into account the pros and cons,

558) St. L. XI, 84.

560) Rom. 10:17.

559) Augsb. Conf., Art. V.

561) Luther, Opp. v. a. VII, 154.

and accordingly arranging one's behavior toward grace, but faith in grace is worked by the Holy Spirit "where and when He wills, in those who hear the Gospel",⁵⁶²⁾ and this under prior *terrores conscientiae*, whereby all thoughts of "personal self-settlement," "free moral agency," "different behavior," and the like are consumed like straw by fire.⁵⁶³⁾ We already recalled in the doctrine of conversion,⁵⁶⁴⁾ that it is peculiar to synergism to see the conversion of man to God not in faith in the Gospel, that is, in faith in the forgiveness of sins acquired by Christ and offered in the Gospel, but to think in the direction of the "moral deed" or the moral reformation of man, and thus to transfer it to the domain of the Law. This is again evident in the synergistic doctrine of the means of grace, according to which these make moral demands on man, such as "right conduct" and "self-settlement," if man is to become partaker of God's grace. Conversion to God, however, is essentially conversion to the gospel, i.e., it consists in faith in Christ (Acts 11:21), as Luther briefly puts it: "To convert to God is to believe in Christ, that he is the mediator." ⁵⁶⁵⁾ Conversion to godly action or to the law, which is nexu indivulso bound with conversion to the gospel, is, precisely speaking, a consequence of faith in the gospel, as the Lutheran confession reminds us.⁵⁶⁶⁾ In the background also of the synergistic doctrine of the means of grace, which is set on human achievement, lies the denial of the perfect reconciliation of the world through Christ's work of redemption. Whoever seriously believes that he must help the grace offered and effective in the means of grace to the final result by right conduct or any human performance, has certainly forgotten the perfect reconciliation of the world through the blood of the Son of God. Luther says: "These words: 'The Son of God ... gave Himself for me' are loud thunderbolts and fire from heaven against the righteousness of the law and the doctrine of works. So great wickedness, so great error, darkness and ignorance was in my will and mind, that I could only

562) Augsb. Conf., Art. V. 563) Apol. 90, 20. [Trigl. 125, Apol., IV, 20

 564) II, 544 ff. 549 f.

565) St. L. XIII, 1101. 566) Apol. 171, 28. [Trigl. 259, Apol., XII, 28

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be delivered by such an unspeakably great ransom.... Therefore it is an intolerable and terrible blasphemy for thee to invent any work whereby thou missest to propitiate God, seeing that he cannot be propitiated otherwise than by this immeasurable and infinite treasure, namely, by the death and blood of his Son." ⁵⁶⁷⁾

The means-of-grace doctrine of all deniers of *satisfactio vicaria*. [△]

According to the Scriptures, the Word of God and the sacraments are means of grace only in that they promise the forgiveness of sins present with God (in God's heart, *in foro divino*) through Christ's *satisfactio vicaria*, without any moral requirement, and thereby awaken and strengthen faith. This has been demonstrated both in relation to the word of the Gospel and in relation to the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.⁵⁶⁸⁾ Therefore, it is natural that all deniers of the *satisfactio vicaria* deny the means of grace in the sense of Scripture. If they still address the means of grace, it is only an accommodation to the language of the church. They then understand by means of grace means of stimulation for such moral endeavors by which the *satisfactio vicaria* of Christ is to be replaced or at least completed. This is applied first of all to the outspoken Unitarians of old and new times, who, because they deny the essential divinity of Christ, also reject the *satisfactio vicaria* and place the essence of Christianity in human morality stimulated by Christ's doctrines and example.⁵⁶⁹⁾ The endeavor to lead a "godly life" or to "keep the commandments of God" (trying to keep the commandments) out of the intellectual, psychological and moral stimulation emanating from Christ's person (moral influence theory) takes the place of the means of grace, and thus the means of grace are completely dismissed as *media remissionis peccatorum sive iustificationis*.⁵⁷⁰⁾ But this is also true with respect to all the more recent theologians,⁵⁷¹⁾ who

567, St. L. IX, 236 f. 568) p. 123 ff.

569) RE.³ Harnack, Wesen des Christentums 3, p. 92.

570) The Racau Catechism therefore explicitly denies (question 337, 338) that through the Lord's Supper sin is forgiven and faith is strengthened. The Lord's Supper is not to receive something, but to do God a service.

571) Cf. II, 429 ff., the section "More detailed description of modern theories of reconciliation".

supposedly only want to "deepen" the early church "concept of satisfaction," namely, by including the transformation or reshaping of mankind, that is, sanctification and good works, in the reconciliation of men with God.. If it really stands as Kirn thinks: " We find it imperative to include the transformation of humanity in the concept of the reconciling work [of Christ],"⁵⁷²⁾ then the means of grace are no longer means for the forgiveness of sins, but they become means of stimulation for the "transformation of humanity." This becomes even clearer when the *satisfactio vicaria* is explicitly replaced by the guarantee or surety theory. According to this whimsical theory, the atoning work of Christ consists in the fact that Christ "vouchsafed" or promised the Father that men would practice morality (lead a "godly life") "in a congregation of the reign of God" to be founded by Him. In other words, Christ reconciled men to God by issuing a bill of exchange payable by men themselves. The advocates of the theory of surety, therefore, do not understand the means of grace as signs and testimonies of the God who is gracious through Christ, or as testimony to the fact that God no longer has anything against men for Christ's sake, but as a means of collecting a bill of exchange due, as a reminder and demand addressed to men to pay, or at least to pay in arrears, what Christ has not yet paid. It is evident that means of grace thus constituted are not capable of "awakening and strengthening" the Christian faith, namely, the faith in the forgiveness of sins which Christ has purchased, but rather belong to the Roman pagan aberration which Scripture characterizes by the words, "Ye have lost Christ, who would be justified by the law, and have fallen from grace."⁵⁷³⁾ This is true of every theory of reconciliation by which the *satisfactio vicaria* is touched. Also of Hofmann's theory. Hofmann wanted to make the substitution of a new humanity in the person of Christ stand for Christ's substitutionary doing and suffering and the resulting forgiveness of sins. But by the fact that in Christ there was a new holy humanity and shall continue to become a new holy humanity until the Last Day,

572) RE.³ XX, 574. 573) Gal. 5:4.

Christian faith does not come into being. Christian faith wants to have for its object the forgiveness of sins acquired through Christ and offered in the gospel, Eph. 1:7: ἐν φ [Χρίστῳ] ἐχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τὸν αἵματος αὐτόν, τὴν ἀφεσιν τῶν παραπτωμάτων.⁵⁷⁴⁾

The means of grace and the enthusiasts. ^

The Christian doctrine of the means of grace is eliminated by all enthusiasts, that is, by all those who suppose a revealing and working activity of the Holy Spirit apart from and besides the means of grace ordered by God. We already saw that the Calvinistic Reformed, as a result of their denial of *gratia universalis*, have no means of grace either for all men or even for the elect. Not for the former, because grace is supposedly not available for all men; not for the latter, because grace available for the elect supposedly operates without means. Zwingli can be considered a type of the separation of grace from the means of grace with his well-known assertion that the Holy Spirit has no need of a "chariot" (*vehiculum*). And he says this not only with respect to the sacraments,⁵⁷⁵⁾ but also with respect to the word of the gospel. Zwingli asserts very firmly that faith does not come from the preached Word of God, but by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit, *ipse tractus internus* (whereby we come to God) immediate operantis est Spiritus.⁵⁷⁶⁾ The later Reformed accommodate themselves more in the idiom of the Lutheran doctrine of the means of grace, without going factually beyond Zwingli.⁵⁷⁷⁾ More recent Calvinists, as we have already seen, also maintain very firmly that the actually saving divine efficacy of grace does not take place through the means of grace.^{578a)} The separation principle is most consistently developed by the Quakers. The Quakers believe that on the certain day of the Visitation, the Holy Spirit directly enlightens man without the Word, thus enabling man to grasp the Word of Scripture,

574) Augsb. Conf., art. XX, p. 45, 23 [[Trigl. 55, Augsb. Conf., XX, 23](#)].

575) *Fidei Ratio*; in Niemeyer, p. 24.

576) *Zwinglii Opera* (Schultheß) IV, 125.

577) Winer, *Kompar. Darst.*³, p. 117. For more, see the section, "Summary Assessment of the Reformed Means of Grace Doctrine."

578 a) p. 141.

which is otherwise a dead letter. The Quakers therefore have so-called "silent meetings". About these meetings their theologian, [Robert Barclay](#) († 1690), says: "In meeting together, the great work of each and all should be: to wait upon God, and, withdrawing from his own thoughts and imaginations, to feel the Lord's nearness. ... There no man restricts the Spirit of God, nor does he bring forth his own memorized and collected stuff, but everyone brings forth what the Lord puts into his heart. It may happen among us, and has often happened, that many meetings have taken place without a word being spoken, and yet our souls have been greatly edified and refreshed, and our hearts overwhelmed with the secret sense of God's Spirit and power, which has been delivered without words from one vessel to another."^{578b)} And yet, even the Quakers are not entirely consistent with regard to their silent meetings. [Schneckenburger](#) correctly remarks: "According to these [Quaker] principles, one should not really expect any common worship of God at all, in that time and place are already something determined by one's own election."⁵⁷⁹⁾ — Among the enthusiasts [*Schwärmern*] are also all the newer theologians who, like Ihmels, reject the origin of faith in Christ through the word of Christ alone and maintain that faith is produced in man through the person of Christ, the historical efficacy or appearance of Christ, and so on. [Ihmels](#) says: "Even today only that is real faith in Jesus Christ, which is forced upon man by His appearance itself."⁵⁸⁰⁾

If we put together the arguments that are put forward for a salvific efficacy of the Holy Spirit outside the means of grace ordered by God, they are mainly the following: One thinks that the means of grace are superfluous, because the Holy Spirit can also work without means (*vehiculum*). Furthermore, it is thought that it is not proper for God to bind His revelation of grace and the efficacy of grace to the external means of grace. Furthermore, from the fact that faith does not arise in all the hearers of the Gospel, one thinks one may conclude that the Holy Spirit separates his efficacy,

578b) In Günther, [Symbolik 4, p. 273](#).

579) [Kleine Religionsparteien, S. 90](#).

580) [Central Issues, p. 89](#).

which aims at the production of saving faith, from the Word..⁵⁸¹⁾ But all the arguments are based on rationalistic human considerations. As for the opinion that the means of grace are superfluous, it should be noted: It is not at all a question of whether God cannot also work in the spiritual sphere without means. The only question is whether God says in his revealed Word of God that he wants to work through certain means determined by him and has directed us men to these means. In theology it is not valid to assert possibilities against the facts revealed by God in his Word. Zwingli's objection that the Holy Spirit does not need a chariot is already a theological derailment in principle. The same is true of Ihmels' argument: "It cannot be said seriously enough that if Jesus is really the one as whom the church confesses him, he must also be able to convict of this reality by his reality."⁵⁸²⁾ Quite untheological is also the argument according to which an efficacy bound to external means is supposed to be unworthy of God. What is worthy or unworthy of God we men do not know *a priori*, but must learn *a posteriori* from God's revealed Word, since we are not sufficiently versed *a priori* in the code of divine ethics.⁵⁸³⁾ And as for the conclusion that God must have detached his efficacy from the external Word because not all who hear the Word become faithful, it is based on the error of *gratia irresistibilis*. According to Scripture, there is a divine effect of faith and salvation through the means of the gospel even in those who remain unbelievers and are lost.⁵⁸⁴⁾ This effect, however, because it does not take place in revealed divine majesty but through means, can be resisted. In direct contradiction to Scripture stands also the assertion that the word of the gospel is only to be considered as "an attending circumstance" in the rebirth, and that what

581) So also already Zwingli, Opp. IV, 125: *Sic esse* (namely that 'faith arises through the direct action of the Spirit), *etiam usu deprehenditur, quum quotidie videmus, quosdam evangelii praedicationem audire quidem, sed nihilo magis credere*. [Google]

582) Central Questions, p. 89. 583) 1 Tim. 6:16.

584) Matt. 23:37; Acts 7:51; 13:46. Cf. the section "Conversion can be prevented by man," II, 557 f.

precedes the rebirth and its succession is effected by the word, but not the rebirth itself.⁵⁸⁵⁾ When the Scripture says: ἀναγεννημένοι ... διὰ λόγον ζώντος Θεοῦ,⁵⁸⁶⁾ and: διὰ του λόγου αυτών εις εμέ [πιστεήοντες]⁵⁸⁷⁾ and: ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἁκοης, [Google]⁵⁸⁸⁾ the word of the gospel is not called "an attending circumstance," but the means through which regeneration comes about, resp. faith is worked. Also, these scriptural statements do not address things that precede and follow the rebirth, but the rebirth itself. As for the passage Joh. 3:8: "The wind blows where it wills, and you hear its sound, but you do not know from where it comes and where it goes; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit",⁵⁸⁹⁾ , in this word of Christ the rebirth is described as a "mysterious" process, which, because it is not caused by us, cannot be "rationally comprehended and explained" by us. But expressly it is also said in this passage that the new birth comes "of water and the Spirit," ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος. There is, therefore, a misuse of this passage when it is used as a proof of an immediate effect of regeneration.⁵⁹⁰⁾ But as the *extra enthusiasticum* is contrary to Scripture, so it is also devoid of any natural rational sense. This *Extra* is afflicted with an obvious self-contradiction. Luther's characterization in the Smalcald Articles is completely accurate: "Our enthusiasts condemn the outward word and yet are not silent themselves, but chatter and write the world full, just as if the Spirit could not come through the Scriptures or oral word of the apostles, but through their writing and word He must come. Why also do they not leave their preaching and writing until the Spirit himself comes into the people without and before their writing, as they boast that He came into them without preaching the Scriptures?"⁵⁹¹⁾ The main pity, however, is that every detachment of the divine

585) Hodge, System. Theol. II, 685.

586) 1 Pet. 1:23.

587) Joh. 17:20.

588) Rom. 10:17.

589) Zwingli also cites this passage for the direct effectiveness of the Holy Spirit. *Fidei Ratio*; in Niemeyer p. 25.

590) Hengstenberg correctly remarks on Joh. 3:8 that the *tertium comparationis* is the incomprehensibility.



591) 322, 5. 6.

revelation of grace and the effect of grace from the external Word of God necessarily drifts into Roman waters, namely, it bases the *certitudo gratiae* on the *gratia infusa* instead of on the gracious disposition of God existing through Christ and promised in the means of grace, and therefore lets a forced emotional certainty take the place of the certainty of faith in justification, which nevertheless fails in serious distress of conscience. By separating grace from the means of grace, all enthusiasts come to understand saving grace as an instilled spiritual matter, for the appropriation of which faith as an act of apprehending grace (*actualis apprehensio gratiae*) is not necessary on the part of man. On this version of grace is based the assertion of the Dordrecht resolutions that the saving grace is still present in man even if man loses the *exercitium fidei* through gross sins. Saving grace and saving faith are conceived as a good quality inherent in man and resting in him. Only the process of infusion is different in Rome and among the enthusiasts in that it takes place on the enthusiastic side without the means of grace ordered by God, on the Roman side primarily through the means of grace made by the "Church".

The denial of the means of grace in the personal practice of Christians. [^]

In order to remain in the right humility in the decisive rejection of all erroneous conceptions of the means of grace, it must be remembered that even those Christians who teach correctly about the means of grace and also believe correctly as a rule, very often forget the means of grace in their own personal practice. This happens as often as they want to base the certainty of grace or forgiveness of sins on the feeling of grace or *gratia infusa* instead of on God's promise in the objective means of grace. We are all born enthusiasts. Instead of hearing and believing God's declaration of love in the gospel, that is, in the means of grace ordered by him, or still differently expressed: instead of looking after God's reconciled heart, which, thanks be to God, is present through Christ, and which God reveals and presents to us in the gospel and in the sacraments, we look into our own heart and

we want to measure God's attitude towards us according to the thoughts and moods of our own hearts. But this is a practical denial of the fact that God has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and thus also a practical denial of the means of grace in which God informs us of the fact of our being reconciled. We stand here at a point in the spiritual life where the Christian has the time of his life to learn. Christianity is a very peculiar religion. It is beyond the human horizon and beyond the concept of religion that is innate to us. Innate to us is the *opinio legis*, the religion of the law. When we see virtue in us, we think God is gracious. When we see sin in ourselves and our conscience condemns us for it, we think that God wants to reject us. But according to the Christian religion, it stands that God is gracious for Christ's sake "without works of the law," that is, regardless of whether we have kept or transgressed God's law. The righteousness that matters before God is located "outside us," as the Formula of Concord says.⁵⁹²⁾ It is the righteousness of Christ, or what is the same: it is the forgiveness of sins that God promises to us for Christ's sake in the means of grace. We therefore lead our spiritual life on the right basis and in harmony with the peculiarity of the Christian religion only when, to speak with Luther, we "go out of ourselves" and base our faith in the grace of God on the means of grace which are apart from us, on the Word of God and its seal, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Admittedly, the *gratia infusa*, the word used in the right sense for true Christian sanctification and righteousness of life, also has the destiny of being *signum et testimonium* of divine grace.⁵⁹³⁾ But the *gratia infusa* always remains deficient. It does not pass the test, neither before one's own conscience nor before the revealed divine law. So it must remain with the practice which Luther describes thus: "There is yet no counsel but that thou yield thyself apart from thyself and all human comfort to his word alone."⁵⁹⁴⁾ This is to be discussed further under the following section.

592) 622, 55. [*Trigl.* 935, F. C., Sol. Decl., III, 55 , 593) Apol. 135, 154, 155. [*Trigl.* 199, Apol., III, 154f. 

594) *St. L.* XI, 455.

The importance of the Christian doctrine of the Means of Grace.

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Adolf Harnack allows himself the following criticism of Luther: "The Christian, as Luther himself knew best, does not live from the means of grace, he lives through the personal union with God which he experiences in Christ."⁵⁹⁵) It is clear from these words that Harnack is contrasting the life of a Christian from the means of grace with personal union with God. Harnack thinks that whoever wants to experience personal union with God in Christ, that is, to become inwardly or truly devout, must above all avoid the means of grace in the sense that grace is given through them. This method of experiencing God in Christ was overlooked by Luther, although he actually knew better, and thus led the Reformation in the wrong direction. Thus, says Harnack explicitly, "Luther stepped back into the abandoned narrow circles of the Middle Ages."⁵⁹⁶) Harnack's criticism coincides exactly with the criticism that Carlstadt, Zwingli and comrades made of Luther. As is well known, the latter also never tired of exposing Luther's aberrations in the doctrine of the means of grace. With his insistence on the external word and the sacraments as means of grace, Luther damaged personal piety and hindered the spirit, because spirit and personal piety do not come through such external things. Zwingli said: "I believe, indeed I know, that all sacraments are so far from conferring grace that they do not even bring it or dispense it (*Credo, imo scio omnia sacramenta tam abesse, ut gratiam conferant, ut ne adferant quidem aut dispensent*). In this I may seem too bold to you, most powerful emperor. But it remains so. For as grace comes (*fit*) from the divine Spirit or is given (but I take the word grace according to the Latin manner of speaking for pardon, forbearance, and benefit given in vain), so that gift comes to the spirit alone. But no guide or chariot is necessary to the Spirit, for He himself is the power and the bearer, by whom all things are borne, to whom it is not necessary to be borne; and we have never read this in Holy Scriptures, that things falling into the senses (*sensibilia*), such as the sacraments are, certainly bring the Spirit with them."⁵⁹⁷) On the same point of view stand also more recent Reformers with their

595) *Dogmengeschichte, Abriß, 1905, p. 431.*

597) *Fidei Ratio*; in Niemeyer, p. 24.


596) op. cit.

decided assertion that "efficacious grace" works "immediately", and that in the rebirth the outer word is an "attending circumstance", but not the means by which the rebirth comes about. All the newer theologians, including those who call themselves Lutheran, stand on Harnack's and Zwingli's point of view, who want faith in Christ to come about through the "living person of Christ," through "the historical reality of Christ," etc., instead of through the word of Christ alone, and in this way also with the justification of wanting to defend against intellectualism or the externalization of Christianity and to ensure the inner "experience" of God in Christ.

Regarding this criticism of Luther and the Lutheran church, which continued through the centuries, it must be said: Luther knew "best" two things. First, that the Christian lives only through personal union with God as revealed in Christ. Hence Luther's polemic against Rome's doctrine that the means of grace bring *ex opere operato* into the possession of grace without the personal faith that grasps the promise of grace offered in the means of grace. On the other hand, Luther knew "best" that "every personal union" with God is a dreamed one, based on self-deception, which does not come about by the means of grace, or what is the same: which is not faith in the forgiveness of sins that God offers for Christ's sake in the Word of the Gospel and in the sacraments. How well Luther knew this, we see from the Smalcald Articles, where he says: "In these matters concerning the oral, outward Word, it is to be firmly adhered to that God gives no one His Spirit or grace without through or with the preceding outward Word. So that we may guard against the enthusiasts, that is, spirits who boast that they have the Spirit without and before the Word. ... This is all the old devil and old serpent, who also made Adam and Heva enthusiasts, leading from the external Word of God to spirituality and conceit (*proprias opiniones*)'. ... Summa, enthusiasm is in Adam and his children from the beginning to the end of the world, instilled and poisoned in them by the old dragon, and is the origin, strength and power of all heresy, also of the Papacy and Mahomet. Therefore we should and must insist that God does not want to deal with us men except through his outward Word and Sacrament'.

But everything that is praised by the Spirit without such Word and Sacrament' is the devil."⁵⁹⁸⁾

These coarse words of Luther and the Lutheran Confessions have offended people in the past and now. But there is nothing exaggerated in them. The factual situation is this: In the kingdom of nature God works everywhere in the world. The universe has its existence in him.⁵⁹⁹⁾ And as far as especially the men are concerned, God is the *causa efficiens* of the natural life of all men under all heavenlies. God gives life and breath to everyone everywhere.⁶⁰⁰⁾ In him all men live, move and are.⁶⁰¹⁾ God also gives everywhere and to all men the goods that belong to the natural life. He gives men rain from heaven and fruitful seasons and fills their hearts with food and joy.⁶⁰²⁾ But the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, and faith in the forgiveness of sins, regeneration to spiritual life, and all the spiritual goods connected therewith, God gives only through the means of grace which He has ordained, through the Word of the Gospel and the Sacraments. This fact is testified to by Scripture, which says that all members of the Church will believe until the Last Day through the word of the apostles,⁶⁰³⁾ are born again through the word⁶⁰⁴⁾ and Baptism⁶⁰⁵⁾. Hence Christ's command to His Church not to stay at home, but to go into all the world with the sermon of the Gospel,⁶⁰⁶⁾ preaching repentance and forgiveness of sins among all nations in His name.⁶⁰⁷⁾ Hence also the description of the peoples who do not have the Word of the Gospel as peoples who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,⁶⁰⁸⁾ although they have the light of the earthly sun and God does not leave Himself unwitnessed to them by presenting His goods for bodily life.⁶⁰⁹⁾ So indissolubly is "personal union with God" bound to the means of grace that men who are still outside the Christian church are described as those "who do not believe in the Word",⁶¹⁰⁾ and that the apostle Paul ascribes conceit and denies Christian knowledge to anyone who does not abide by the sound words

598) Müller 321, 3 ff. [[Trigl. 495, Part III, Art. VIII, 3-10](#) ] 599)
Col. 1:17.600) Acts 17:25.

601) Acts 17:28.

602) Acts 14:17. 603) Joh. 17:20.

604) 1 Pet. 1:23.

605) Tit. 3:5.

606) Mark. 16:15. 16.

607) Luke 24:47.

608) Luke 1:78. 79; Is. 9:2; 60:2.

609) Acts 14:17.

610) 1 Pet. 3:1.

of our Lord Jesus Christ, *τενφωται, μη επιντάμενος*.⁶¹¹⁾ This scriptural expression, "puffed up, knowing nothing," resembles in sharpness the expression of the Smalcald Articles, "God will not deal with us men except by his outward word and sacrament.' But everything that is praised by the Spirit without such 'word and sacrament' is the devil."

It has been recalled that the people who do not want to see the faith founded on the external means of grace have a good intention. They want to prevent an "externalization of Christianity", the mere "head knowledge", the "intellectualism", etc. They want to prevent an "externalization of Christianity", a mere "head knowledge", "intellectualism" etc., and on the other hand help a "heart Christianity" and an inner "experience" of the facts of salvation to exist. In this respect, more recent dogmatic historians have, for example, conceded a partial justification to the rapture of Andreas Osiander.⁶¹²⁾ Let us leave the human "good intention" to itself! In spite of all conceded good intentions, we have to state on the basis of Scripture that we have to deal with ignoramuses (*μη Ιηιατάμενοι*, 1 Tim. 6:4) and quacks who do not know what they are saying or putting, and with all their might pursue exactly the opposite of what they have set out to achieve, in all those who want to detach God's revelation of grace and the effect of grace from the means of grace. The "fellowship with God", the "inner experience" of Christ, the "warmth in Christianity" always comes only in one way, namely through faith in the Word of God, in the forgiveness of sins, which is present through Christ's *satisfactio vicaria*, and which God promises through the means of grace. Whoever detaches this "experience" from the word of grace, the *λόγος τής χάριτος*, gets into his own flesh in every respect. In the place of real knowledge of spiritual things, which is imparted only by abiding in the words of Christ, comes puffing up by one's own wisdom, the *τενφωται*. In place of faith in divine grace, which comes merely from the word of grace or is God's effect through the word,⁶¹³⁾ comes the

611) 1 Tim. 6:3-4. cf. e.g. [II, 128](#).

612) Seeberg, *Dogmengesch.* [II, 360 ff.](#)

613) Rom. 10:17; 1 Cor. 2:4. 5. Luther: "Just as God gives the Word, which is His, not our Word, so He also gives faith in the Word, so that it is both God's work, Word and faith or forgiveness of sins and faith." ([XIII, 2440.](#))

"autosuggestion", as it has been recently expressed, an "imaginary and self-made 'enthusiasm'".⁶¹⁴⁾ The predicates "imagined" and "self-made" correspond exactly to the facts of the case, because it is established from Scripture that the "enthusiasm" or "enlightenment" or "rebirth" which immediately arises cannot be traced back to the Holy Spirit as *causa efficiens*. Except in reserve cases, which do not concern us men,⁶¹⁵⁾ the Holy Spirit does not concern himself with immediate effects in the kingdom of grace. Scripture binds all Christian knowledge of truth to Christ's Word, εὐὰν νμεῖς μείνητε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ ἐμφ ... γνῶσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν.⁶¹⁶⁾ Through the Word, the Holy Spirit works faith and regeneration.⁶¹⁷⁾ Through the sermon of faith the Spirit is received.⁶¹⁸⁾ The Word of the Cross (ὁ λόγος ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ) is God's power to those who are saved, δύναμις θεοῦ.⁶¹⁹⁾ Therefore, truly, whatever is thought to be the effect of the Holy Spirit without the Word and apart from the Word is a *non-ens*, "imaginary" and "self-made." What one has or thinks to have without means of grace is not of the Holy Spirit, but human product, "man-made".⁶²⁰⁾ Here the ways of enthusiasts are binding with the way of Rome. Whether one lets the "Spirit" or "the person of Christ" or "the historical reality of Christ" or something else take the place of the means of grace — every detachment of the divine revelation of grace and the effect of grace from the means of grace drives one into an effect of one's own, whereby an alleged *gratia infusa* is actually put in the place of the *favor Dei propter Christ* as the reason for the forgiveness of sins and salvation. Justification by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, without the works of the law, is abandoned, and thus the foundation of the certainty of grace and salvation is withdrawn. One cannot allow such a deep intrusion into Christian doctrine as is present in the detachment of grace from the divinely ordained

614) Von Öttingen, Luth Dogmatik II^{II}, p. 333.

615) Luke 1:15. 616) Joh. 8:31-32.

617) 1 Cor. 2:4-5; 1 Pet. 1:23. 618) Gal. 3:2, 5.

619) 1 Cor. 1:18.

620) Aptly says J. Gottschick, RE.² XVII, 335: "Where the pretended 'immediate fellowship' is really independent against the external Word, it is only an intercourse with a phantasy image of God and Christ."

means of grace and yet keep the Christian faith intact.

These are the evil consequences of setting aside the means of grace when the wrong principle is applied consistently. In many cases, however, the wrong principle is not carried out in practice. This is because every false doctrine proves to be useless in a serious case, that is, when the conscience wakes up. We already saw this with the Calvinist thesis of *gratia particularis*. It sounds quite plausible when it is argued in favor of it in this or a similar way: "It cannot be supposed that God intends what is never accomplished, that He adopts means for an end which is never to be attained"⁶²¹⁾ and from this allows itself the conclusion that God's grace and Christ's merit cannot extend to all men. But in the case of serious challenge and real need of conscience, the advocates of *gratia particularis* themselves refer to *gratia universalis*.⁶²²⁾ Also against the *satisfactio vicaria* a whole series of reasons is given, which are theoretically not bad, as for example: God can forgive sin according to his power as a supreme judge without the vicarious satisfaction, which way is also more worthy for God as well as more advantageous for man in ethical relation. But in the distress of conscience the fighters of *satisfactio vicaria* like Bushnell, Ritschl, Hugo Grotius returned to this doctrine.⁶²³⁾ So it stands also with respect to the means of grace. One can, from the study table or from some other safe place, adduce reasons for the separation of grace and the Spirit from the external word, by which one comes to be called out, both in oneself and in others, for piety and scholarship. But in the times of *terrores conscientiae*, those who have hitherto made do with a grace directly revealed and wrought realize that they must either despair or grasp the immovable rock of the objective promise of grace in the means of grace. It therefore stands thus: as the denial of *gratia universalis* and the denial of *satisfactio vicaria* refute themselves in the seriousness of practice, so the same is to be said with regard to the detachment of grace from the means of grace.

It has been pointed out that in some cases great certainty of grace has been revealed in those who assert immediate enlightenment

621) [II, 27 f.](#) 622) [II, 54.](#)

623) [II, 442 ff. ff.](#)

against the external word. The answer to this is twofold. On the one hand, even a displayed certainty of grace can be based on self-deception. Secondly, it is possible that those who theoretically detach grace from the external word, in consequence, and without being clear about it, actually base their hearts on the promise of grace in the external word of the gospel. There is then the same inconsistency that Mead describes in the case of the synergists thus: "The most ardent champion of the doctrine of free will may be found supplicating the Lord to give him these graces which, according to his *theory*, he ought to obtain and cultivate for himself." ⁶²⁴⁾

To summarize: Luther and the Lutheran Church are the mouth of Christianity on earth also with regard to their doctrine of the means of grace. All men who — to speak with Harnack — stand in personal union with God, do not experience this personal union with God without, but through the means of grace. ⁶²⁵⁾ Only this way of coming into God's communion of grace is taught in the Scriptures, as we have made clear to ourselves. And only in this way does the central Christian doctrine of the forgiveness of sins by faith without works of the law remain intact, and only in this way is there the *certitudo gratiae et salutis*, to which, according to the explicit explanation of Scripture, the whole Christian religion is founded. ⁶²⁶⁾

There is no human writer who would have put the character of the divinely ordered means of grace, their importance for faith and life, and the destructive effect of the separation of grace from the means of grace into the light so powerfully as Luther. This is due to the fact that Luther became the Reformer of the church in the school of the fear of conscience, while Zwingli's reformation and theology grew up more on the ground of humanism and bears a speculative character throughout. The fact that the entire Calvinist theology, from Calvin down to our time, does not teach the God who has revealed and presented Himself in His Word,

624) *Irenic Theology*. By Charles Marsh Mead. 1905, p. 161.

625) Gottschick, RE.² XVII, 334: "With it" (the view of an "immediate fellowship" with God) "the need for personal certainty of salvation remains unfulfilled."

626) Rom. 4:16: Διὰ τὸντο ἐκ πίστεως, ἵνα κατὰ χάριν εἰς τὸ εἶναι βέβαιαν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν παντὶ τῷ ἀπέρματι.

but rather substitutes speculations about the absolute God for the divine Word at the decisive points, confronted us especially with the doctrines of the grace of God, of Christ's person and work, and therefore also with the doctrine of the means of grace. Let us still listen to Luther in some coherent explanations about the means of grace.

Luther takes it as follows: Christ is and works everywhere in the kingdom of nature, but to rule the heart and conscience, that is, to distribute forgiveness of sins and make them certain, that is what he wants to accomplish through his word. Therefore, everyone should learn to judge God's attitude toward him from the Word of God alone. Luther writes:^{627a)} "What is this said: 'I must be in that which is my Father's'? Are not all creatures of his father? Everything is his; but he has given us the creatures for our use, that we should rule with them here in this worldly life, as we know. But one thing he has reserved for himself, which is called holy and God's own, and which we must especially receive from him. This is his holy word, by which he rules the hearts and consciences, and makes them holy and saved. For this reason also the temple was called his sanctuary or holy dwelling place, because in it he made himself present and heard through his word. So Christ is in that which is his Father's, when he speaks to us by his word, and thereby brings us also to the Father. Behold, therefore he rebuketh his parents, that they should err, and seek him in other things, worldly and human, and in business, among acquaintances and friends, and not think that he should be in that which is his Father's. Hereby he wants to indicate that his governance and the whole Christian nature stands in the word and faith alone, not in other outward things (as the outward seeming holiness of Judaism was) nor in temporal worldly nature or governance. ... Now this is what I have said, that God will not suffer us to rely on anything else, or to cleave with our hearts to anything that is not Christ in His Word, however holy and full of the Spirit it may be. Faith has no other ground on which it can stand. ... We must seek Christ in that which is the Father's, that is, that we keep badly and only the word of the Gospel, which shows

627a) [St. L. XI, 452 ff.](#)

shows us Christ and makes him known to us. And only learn in this and all spiritual trials, if you want to comfort others or yourself, to say with Christ: What is it that you run so now and then, wear yourself out with anxious and sorrowful thoughts, as if God no longer wanted to have mercy on you, and as if there is no Christ to be found, and you do not want to be satisfied before you find him in yourself and feel holy and without sin? Nothing comes of it; it is vain toil and labor. Knowest thou not that Christ will not be, nor be found, but in that which is the Father's? not in that which thou art, or in that which all men are and have. It is not the fault of Christ and his grace; he is and remains undestroyed and can always be found; but it is the fault of thee that thou dost not seek him aright, where he is to be sought, because thou dost follow thy feelings and thinkest to take hold of him with thy thoughts. Here you must come, where not your nor any man's business is, but God's governance, that is, where his Word is; there you will meet him, hear him, and see that there is neither wrath nor displeasure, as you fear and hesitate, but only mercy and heartfelt love toward you. ... But it will be hard before it [the heart] comes to this and grasps such things; it must first start and learn that everything is lost and in vain called seeking Christ, and yet in the end there is no counsel, except that you surrender into the Word alone apart from yourself and all human comfort."

Luther takes the view that it has always been God's way to deal with us men through external means and signs and thus to make us partakers of his grace. Thus, in the New Testament, we have God's grace wherever we have the Word of God and the sacraments, no matter where we are on earth. He writes:^{627b)} "God has always done this, that he has given on earth a bodily sign, a person, place and site, where he certainly wanted to be found. For if we are not bound and caught by a bodily, outward sign, each one will seek God where he desires. That is why the holy prophets wrote a lot about the tabernacle, about the dwelling place and the tabernacle where he wanted to be present. God has always done this. He has also built a temple for us Christians, where he wants to dwell,

627 b) [St. L. III, 924 f.](#)

namely the oral waiting, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are bodily things. But our false prophets, the spirits of the rot and the enthusiasts despise it and throw it away, as if it were useless, and say: Yes, I will sit and wait until a flying Spirit and revelation come to me from heaven. But beware of that! We also know that water, bread, and wine do not save us; but how do you like it that in the Lord's Supper there is not mere bread and wine, or even in baptism simple water, but God says that He wants to be in baptism to cleanse and wash us from sins? And in the Lord's Supper under bread and wine the body and blood of Lord Christ is given. Do you want to despise God and his sign here, and consider and hold the water in Baptism as the water flowing in the Elbe, or so that you boil? Or wilt thou esteem the word of the gospel as the word or address of the peasants in a fair or in taverns? For God has said, "When the word of Christ is preached, I am in your mouth, and I enter your heart with the word through your ears." Therefore we have a sure sign and know that when the gospel is preached, God is present and wants to be found there; there I have a bodily sign that I may recognize and find God. He is also present at Baptism and the Lord's Supper, for he has bound himself to be there. But if I go to St. James or to the Grimmetal, go to a monastery and look for God elsewhere, I will lack him. And if now the factious spirits preach: Just as the monastic life, invocation of the saints, mass and pilgrimage is nothing, so is baptism and the Lord's Supper: that does not work by a long shot. For there is a great difference when God orders and establishes something, or when men establish something. Yes, you should believe God's ordinances and endowments, worship them and hold them in great honor. So he also commanded Moses: Bring them into the land, that is, arrange and name a certain place, so that whoever cannot personally worship you there may turn his body here and turn his face there and pray. So I also have God in a certain place, namely here in the Word and Sacraments, so that even though one is in Rome, or wherever else he may be, if he only turns his face to the Word and Sacraments and worships, he finds our Lord God there, and

even if he were to be found in a straw, he should be sought and honored there."

To the charge that he ties grace to certain, external and seemingly minor things — Harnack also repeats this charge^{627c)} — Luther replies:^{627d)} "If God would have you pick up a straw or pluck up a feather with such a command, order, and promise that through it you should have forgiveness of all sin, grace, and eternal life, should you not accept, love, and praise it with all joy and gratitude, and therefore hold the same straw and feather higher in sanctuary and let it be dearer to you than heaven and earth? For however small the straw or feather may be, yet through it you receive such good as neither heaven nor earth, nor even all the angels, can give you. Why then are we such shameful people that we do not hold baptism, water, bread and wine, that is, Christ's body and blood, oral word, the laying on of a man's hands for forgiveness, as highly sacred as we would hold the straw or feather, even though in them, as we hear and know, God wants to work Himself, and should be His water, word, hand, bread and wine, through which He wants to sanctify you and save you in Christ, who has purchased such things for us and given the Holy Spirit from the Father for such a work? Again, if you went to St. James in a state of armor, or if you let yourself be murdered by Carthusians, Barefooters, pastors [Dominicans] through such a strict life, so that you might be saved, and God had not sanctioned or instituted such a thing, what good would it do you? He knows nothing about it, but the devil and you have devised it as special sacraments or priesthoods. And if thou couldst bear heaven and earth, that thou mightest be saved, yet all is lost; and he that lifteth up the straw (where it is commanded) would do more than thou, and if thou couldst bear ten worlds."

Luther states that the practical result can only be despair if we do not learn anew every day to hold to the external word of the gospel against all feeling and sensation. He says:^{627e)} "Against everything that reason enters into or wants to measure and investigate, yes, against everything that all the senses feel and comprehend, we must learn to hold to the word and simply

627 c) [op. cit., p. 431](#). 627 d) [St. L. XVI, 2296](#).

627 e) [St. L. VIII, 1102](#).

judge according to the same. ... For if thou wilt judge according to that which thou seest and feelest, and if the Word of God be held up to thee, thine own feeling thou wilt hold up against it, and speak: You say many things to me, but my heart says many things differently, and if you felt what I feel, you would also say differently, etc.: then you do not have the Word of God in your heart, but it is muffled and extinguished by your own thoughts, reason and contemplation. In short, if you do not let the word be more valid than all your feelings, eyes, senses and heart, then you must be lost, and you cannot be helped. ... I also feel my sin and law and the devil on my neck, that I lie under it as under a heavy burden. But what shall I do? If I were to conclude according to such feelings and my ability, I and all men would have to despair and perish. But if I want to be helped, I must truly turn around and look at the word and speak according to it: I feel the wrath of God, the devil, death, and hell; but the Word says otherwise, that I have a gracious God through Christ, who is my Lord, above devils and all creatures."

Luther also emphasizes particularly strongly that the written Word of God is also a means of grace. He says to 1 John 5:13: "Lest anyone deceive us, John says against the enthusiasts that he writes this: 'These things I have written to you.' The letter is with them a dead thing on paper.' But John says: 'I write to you,' because it is to serve as a means by which one comes to faith and eternal life. For thus says John in the 20th chapter of his Gospel: These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life in his name'. Therefore we should know that the testimony of God does not come to us without the oral voice or Scripture. All Scripture, inspired of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for chastening in righteousness; that a man of God may be perfect, and fit for all good works. 2 Tim. 3:16-17. Likewise, in the preceding verse of the chapter cited: 'Because thou hast known the Holy Scriptures from thy childhood, the same is able to instruct thee unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.' Again 1 Tim. 4:13: 'Continue in reading, in exhortation, in doctrines!' Why does he command to read the Scriptures if it is a dead thing? Why

do they write and publish books themselves, if the letter is neither valid nor useful? Why do they want to instruct us and others through their writings? If they say that the Spirit is before the writing, and they have the spirit first, then they write: this is nothing. For in such a way the Scriptures are good for nothing but show. Hear what Christ says: I pray not for them only, but also for them which shall believe on me through their word,' John 17:20. By the word is certainly to be understood the oral or written word, not the inward word. Therefore, one must first of all hear or read the Word, which the Holy Spirit uses as a means. When one reads the Word, the Holy Spirit is there, and in this way it is impossible for one to hear or read the Scriptures without benefit." 627f)

Summary assessment of the Reformed doctrine of means of grace.

At the risk of being accused of unnecessary repetition and prolixity, we leave here, for several reasons, a summary assessment of the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace. — Zwingli's doctrine of a direct effect of the Spirit and the communication of grace caused a division in Protestant Christianity at the time of the Reformation. This division has not been eliminated to this day and forms a standing offence to the unbelieving world and gives Rome a welcome opportunity to mock the brokenness of Protestantism. Furthermore, it is an undeniable fact that the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace has also penetrated the Lutheran Church, especially through Pietism. It is fully evident that the newer so-called "theology of experience" has in principle completely gone over to the Reformed camp, because it wants to base faith in Christ not only on Christ's word, but also, in distinction from the word, on the "living Christ," the person of Christ," "the historical appearance" and "effect" of Christ. Finally, this is — and this can hardly be reminded often enough — a point on which all Christians have to learn throughout their lives. Theoretically, it is not difficult to find the right position against the Reformed Church, Pietism and experiential theology at this point, thanks to

627f) St. L. IX. 1514 f. Likewise in Joh. 17. 20: St. L. VIII. 829 ff.

the clarity of Scripture. But to hold the right doctrines in practice is effort and work. Right standing in practice is removed from human ability and is merely an effect of the Holy Spirit through the Word. Not only can we by natural powers think that faith and regeneration are immediate effects of the Holy Spirit, but we can also by natural powers by our own action produce moods and states in us which we think are effects of the Holy Spirit. But to cling in true faith to the outward means of grace, as certain "signs and testimonies" of God's gracious will toward us, to hold fast with the heart to the outward word of the gospel, especially in the face of temptation, against all feeling and sensation, against the condemnation judgment of the divine law and of our own conscience: This we are able to do only through the action of the Holy Spirit, overcoming and killing the flesh, to whom Christ crucified, that is, Christ for us and outside us, is an offence and foolishness.

The question has been raised whether the peculiarly Reformed doctrine of the means of grace can still be called Christian. In answering this question, we are confronted with the same situation that confronted us in the Reformed doctrine of Christ's person and work. Where Reformed Christology consistently carries out its fundamental theorem that the finite is not capable of the infinite (*Finitum non est capax infiniti*), it leaves Christian territory and is forced out into Socinian (Unitarian) territory, that is, driven away to the denial of the Incarnation of the Son of God. Reformed Christology, however, returns to Christian territory when it becomes inconsistent, namely when, in the seriousness of Christian practice, it forgets the *finitum non est capax infiniti*, admits the real fellowship of divine and human nature (*realis communio naturarum*), so vigorously rejected before, and says of divine nature that it gives infinite value to the suffering of human nature.⁶²⁸⁾ This double-sided character, consistency and inconsistency, confronts us also in the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace. Insofar as Reformed theology really teaches and adheres to its fundamental doctrine that the actually saving grace is communicated without the

628) Cf. the exposition [II, 140 f. 299 ff.](#)

means of grace or alongside them (efficacious grace acts *immediately*), it leaves the Christian territory. As far as it abandons its fundamental proposition in practice, it returns to the Christian territory.

We remind again of the *status controversiae*. In question stands not whether God could not work directly, if he wanted to work so. In question stands also not whether God does not actually reserve himself cases of the direct effectiveness, which is also to be admitted.⁶²⁹⁾ Nor does it stand in question — we emphasize this against the modern "experience theologians" — whether in the history of the world and of the church we do not perceptibly encounter an efficacy of the living Christ exalted at the right hand of God, which is also to be admitted. The only question is whether God can remind us men, when our conscience is affected by the law of God and we need a certain report about God's attitude towards us, of the objective Word of God's grace in Christ, the Gospel, and to the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as objective *signa* and *testimonia* of his gracious will, or whether in this situation — *scil.* in the questioning of God's grace — we are to be referred to an immediate effect of God, an *interior Spiritus illuminatio* and an immediate agency of the Spirit.⁶³⁰⁾ The former is taught by the Lutheran Church, the latter is put forward in the Reformed fellowships, where the Reformed principle is followed.

There is no scriptural evidence for the Reformed doctrine of means of grace. We have already explained in detail under the sections "The Means of Grace in General"⁶³¹⁾ and "All Means of Grace Have the Same Purpose and Effect"⁶³²⁾ that according to Scripture the word of the gospel and the sacraments, namely baptism and the Lord's Supper, are given and ordered by God precisely for the purpose of offering the forgiveness of sins available through Christ's *satisfactio vicaria*, and that from the same means and through the same (εκ and διὰ) faith and regeneration come and the Holy Spirit is received. We add here that apostolic practice also agrees with this doctrine of Scripture,

629) Luke 1:15.

630) Calvin, *Inst.* III, 24, 8, and Hodge, *Syst. Theology. II. 685.*

631) p. 122 ff. 632) p. 127 ff.

while Reformed practice contrasts with apostolic practice. Where Reformed theology puts into practice its doctrine of the immediate efficacy of the Holy Spirit, it warns souls against seeking grace and salvation in the means of grace. Thus, as we have already seen, Calvin warns against trying to discern election from the common calling, that is, from the word of the Gospel.⁶³³ Likewise, the *Consensus Tigurinus*⁶³⁴ warns against the idea "as if the visible sign" (the sacraments), "while it is being offered, at the same moment also brings with it the grace of God." The Geneva Catechism also inculcates that "one need not cling to the outward signs in order to seek salvation there."⁶³⁵ We find exactly the opposite practice in the apostles. Paul does not warn against clinging to the outward word, but inculcates it very emphatically when, at his farewell to the Ephesian elders, he says: "Now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace" (παράτιθεμαι νμᾶς τῷ Κυρίῳ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ).⁶³⁶ Even Peter, on the first day of Pentecost, does not warn against the *visibile signum* of baptism, but refers the people who ask, "Men, brethren, what shall we do?" to Baptism, with the instruction that Baptism is for the remission of sins (εἰς ἀφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν νμῶν).⁶³⁷ And in order to immediately take into account the objection of the Reformers that being baptized is used by many for caral security: Since the first day of Pentecost, Peter has experienced many abuses of Baptism on the part of those who either did not believe in baptismal grace at all or fell away from it again through unbelief.⁶³⁸ Nevertheless, Peter does not turn to the Reformed camp. He does not say with Böhl and all the old and new Reformed: Baptismal washing

633) *Inst.* III, 24. 8.

634) *Cap.* XX; in Niemeyer, p. 195: *Utilitas, quam ex sacramentis percipimus, ad tempus, quo ea nobis administrantur, minime restringi debet, perinde aesi visibile signum, dum in medium profertur, eodem secum momento Dei gratiam adveheret.* [[Google](#)]

635) *De sacramentis*; in Niemeyer, p. 161: *Cur illic [in the sacraments] quaerendum esse Christ dicis? Intelligo non esse visibilibus signis inhaerendum, ut salutem inde petamus.* [[Google](#)]

636) Acts 20:32.

637) Acts 2:38.

638) Acts 5:1 ff (Ananias and Sapphira); 8, 13 ff (Simon).

does not put away sin and does not make saved.⁶³⁹⁾ Rather, Peter continues to doctrine in his first epistle of baptism: σώζει βάπτισμα, baptism makes saved.⁶⁴⁰⁾ Likewise, the apostles had the sad experience that not all the hearers of the Word became faithful. Paul tells us explicitly, "for all men have not faith."⁶⁴¹⁾ But still, the apostles do not separate the effect of faith and regeneration from the external Word. They do not say with Zwingli: Tractus internus immediate operantis est Spiritus,⁶⁴²⁾ nor with Shedd: "The influence of the Holy Spirit is directly upon the human spirit, and is independent even of the Word."⁶⁴³⁾ Rather, they maintain that faith, regeneration, and the Spirit come through the external Word.⁶⁴⁴⁾ In short, as the apostles teach that the external Word of the Gospel and the *visibilia signa* of the sacraments bring about the grace of God or the forgiveness of sins for us men, so also in the practical application of this doctrine they refer those inquiring about grace to these external things as from the means ordered by God to which faith must adhere. Therefore, we cannot but judge that the Reformed theologians and confessional writings are giving false instructions when they instruct souls not to seek grace and salvation in the Word and in Baptism.

Reformed theology gets into a very strange situation through its doctrine of the means of grace. By advocating an immediate communication of saving grace, it declares the whole method of the acquisition of salvation taught in Scripture to be a failure on the part of God. Reformed theology also found itself in a similar situation in the doctrine of Christ's person and work through the assertion that Christ's human nature could not be an organ for the actions of the divine nature. As for the organ relation of Christ's human nature, according to Scripture the matter stands that the Son of God appeared in the flesh, that is, in human nature, in order to destroy the works of the devil through the works accomplished in human nature.⁶⁴⁵⁾ In God's view, therefore, the

639) Böhl, Dogmatik, pp. 5-58. 366.

649) 1 Pet. 3:21.

641) 2 Thess. 3:2.

612) Opera IV, 126.

643) Dogmatic Theology, II, 501.

644) Rom. 10:14-17 1 Pet. 1:23; Gal. 3:2.

645) 1 John 3:8.

he human nature of Christ is an entirely suitable means by which the divine work of world redemption is accomplished. Reformed Christology says no to this. It maintains that the human nature of Christ can never be an organ for divine actions and effects, and that therefore the action or activity (*actio, operatio*) of the divine nature of Christ is to be separated from his human nature. We heard, "Omnipresence and omniscience are not attributes of which a creature can be made the organ."⁶⁴⁶ Thus, in effect, the assumption of human nature on the part of the Son of God is declared to be a mistaken measure. A similar criticism of a divine measure comes out in the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace. According to the Scriptures, God, having reconciled the world to Himself through Christ, is now to proclaim His Word in the world and to administer Baptism, so that from these means and through these means men may become faithful or born again and thus partake of the grace acquired from Christ. In the divine view, therefore, Word and Baptism are quite suitable media for the communication of grace and the effect of grace. Reformed theology is of the opposite opinion, declaring: "There is here no place for the use of means", "Nothing intervenes between the volition of the Spirit and the regeneration of the soul".⁶⁴⁷ Tractus internus immediate operantis est Spiritus.⁶⁴⁸ Dux vel vehiculum Spiritui non est necessarium.⁶⁴⁹ "The sacraments do not operate the grace signified by them in us. Only the Holy Spirit can communicate grace."⁶⁵⁰

Where is the error? How does the Reformed theology get into this bad situation that it opposes the yes of Scripture with a direct no? This is because Reformed theology, as in its Christology, so also in its doctrine of the means of grace, is dominated by the idea of the absolute God who cannot be bound to any means. Behind the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace stands the rationalistic thought, which is outside of Scripture, that the divine omnipotence, which is necessary for the production of faith and rebirth, cannot be accomplished by means.

646) Hodge, Syst. Theology, II, 417. 647) Hodge, op. cit. p. 685. 684.

648) Zwingli, *De Providentia. Opp.* IV, 125.

649) Zwingli, *Fidei ratio*. Niemeyer, p. 24.

650) Böhl, Dogmatik, p. 550.

Among the newer Reformed theologians, Charles Hodge in particular brings this thought to the fore. He says: "If this one point be determined, namely, that efficacious grace is the *almighty power* of God, it decides all questions in controversy on this subject."⁶⁵¹⁾ He then asserts, "Regeneration itself, the infusion of a new life into the soul, is the immediate work of the Spirit. There is here no place for the use of means."⁶⁵²⁾ He thinks that one can spare oneself all book-writing. In order to get along in the doctrine of means of grace, he says, it is only necessary to hold on to this one thought, that rebirth is an effect of divine omnipotence. He says: "Volumes have been written on the contrary hypothesis; which volumes lose all their value if it be once admitted that regeneration, or effectual calling, is the work of *omnipotence*." To this it is to be said: Admittedly it is undeniable that the Christian faith or regeneration arises only by divine omnipotence. This is taught by the doctrines of Scripture. Luther also teaches this in a particularly decisive way, for example, when he says: "If God creates faith in man, it is as great a work as if he created heaven and earth again."⁶⁵³⁾ This is also to be held against all forms of synergism. But that therefore faith and rebirth should come into existence without means is a purely human thought. Scripture teaches both that faith and regeneration are an effect of divine omnipotence, and that this effect takes place through the external means of the Word and baptism. But now Reformed theology has settled on the idea of immediacy. This thought is the *πρότον ψεύδος* from which the scriptural statements about the means of grace are reinterpreted. When the Scripture says *διὰ* and *ἐκ*, by the Word and from the Word, by baptism and from baptism, "by" must not mean "through," and "from" must not mean "out of," but "without," at most "besides," the attending circumstance. And when the Scripture places the Word and baptism virtually in the subject and says: the Word does (וְכִן [HEBREW]) what pleases God,⁶⁵⁴⁾ the Word is like a fire and like a hammer that breaks rocks,⁶⁵⁵⁾ the Word is the light,⁶⁵⁶⁾ the Word is the sword of the Spirit⁶⁵⁷⁾ and: "baptism doth

651) op. cit., p. 683.

653) St. L. IX. 972.

655) Jer. 23:29.

657) Eph. 6:17.

652) op. cit., p. 685.

654) Is. 55:11.

656) 2 Pet. 1:19 : Ps. 119:105.

Σοκεῖ ["also now save us"].⁶⁵⁸⁾ so this must mean: word and baptism represent externally what the spirit works internally before or besides without means, namely the immediate internal enlightenment of the spirit, the immediate internal washing of the soul by the spirit and the blood of Christ.

For the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace there is not even a semblance of Scriptural proof. If we examine the attempted scriptural proofs, it becomes apparent that we are always dealing with *petitiones principii*, that is, it is assumed as proven, as a foregone conclusion, that the Holy Spirit has no need of a *vehiculum*, indeed, that it is to God's honor if His *efficacious grace* is tied to the means of grace. According to this human postulate, the individual scriptural passages are then exegeted. Wherever the Holy Spirit or God's efficacy is mentioned in Scripture, immediate efficacy is inferred, even if it is immediately stated that the efficacy takes place through the Word or through water. Furthermore, where it is addressed in Scripture that no man can give faith to another, and no man to himself, but that the natural man is dead in sins, and therefore his conversion consists in a rebirth, in a revival from spiritual death by divine omnipotence, there again the direct efficacy is discontinued. And in this way of carrying out a "scriptural proof", all the means of grace agree, no matter whether we look to the Zwickau prophets or to Zwingli or to Calvin or to Beza or to Böhl or to Hodge, Shedd or Macpherson.

In Alexander Hodge⁶⁵⁹⁾ we find the Reformed "scriptural proofs" briefly compiled. To the question, "What arguments go to show that there is an *immediate* influence of the Spirit on the soul, *besides* that which is exerted through the truth?"⁶⁶⁰⁾ he answers with the following six scriptural evidences which

658) 1 Pet. 3:21.

659) [Outlines of Theology](#), p. 338 f.

660) By "truth" these Reformed understand the word of truth or the word of the gospel. Thus Shedd, [Dogmatic Theol., II, 509](#), by adding that by the word of truth the regeneration does not happen. Correctly, however, Barnes on 1 Pet. 1:23: "It is the uniform doctrine of the Scriptures that divine truth is made the instrument of quickening the soul into spiritual life." Shedd, however, allows himself l. c. the following exegesis:

we set forth here:: "1st. The influence of the *Spirit* is distinguished from that of the *Word*." To prove this as a scriptural teaching, primo loco reference is made to Joh. 6:45, 64-65. In these passages, however, it is only said that coming to Christ does not stand in man's power (v. 44), but that all who actually come to Christ are taught by God, v. 46. The same thought is expressed in vv. 64-65: "No man can come to me, except it be given him of my Father." So little is there any address here — which A. Hodge nevertheless wishes to prove — of an "*immediate* influence of the Spirit" and of an effect "*besides*," apart from the Word, that rather the very opposite, namely, the effect through the Word, is very emphatically taught. Christ expressly declares v. 63: "The words (τα ρήματα) which I speak are spirit and are life." And Peter also correctly understood this instruction of Christ about the efficacy of the Holy Spirit tied to the Word. He responds to Christ's question, "Do you also want to go away?" V. 68: "Lord, whither shall we go? Thou hast words of eternal life." "2d. A *divine* influence is declared to be necessary to the reception of the truth." Reference is made to Ps. 119:18, where it is said, "Open mine eyes, that I may see the wonders of thy law!" Here, however, it is taught that the opening of the eyes to the truth of the divine Word of God is effect. But nothing is said of an immediate effect. On the contrary, in the same psalm it is taught that the opening of the eyes to the word is by the word itself, v. 104-105: "Thy word maketh me wise," and, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." "3d. Such an internal operation on the heart is attributed to God." Again, the same factual situation! Reference is made to Phil. 2:13: "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, according to his good pleasure." According to this passage, however, willing and doing are very decidedly taught as God's effect. But of a immediate effect, which Alexander Hodge wants to prove from the passage,

When Jam. 1:18 and 1 Pet. 1:23 say that the rebirth happens "through the word of truth" (λόγῳ ἀληθείας) and "through the Word of God" (διὰ λόγον ζώντος θεοῦ), it only means: "under the Gospel dispensation" or "under the Christian dispensation". Concerning 1 Pet. 1:23, Shedd still remarks in particular: "The 'Word of God,' here, is not 'the incorruptible seed' itself from which the birth proceeds. The Holy Ghost is this."

nothing stands there to prove it. Rather, even in the Epistle to the Philippians, the apostle binds the divine effect for salvation so much to the Word that he still rejoices when Christ is preached even "for the sake of hatred and hatred" (δια φθόνον καί ἐπὶ), chap. 1:15 ff. "4th. The gift of the *Spirit* is distinguished from the gift of the Word." Again, the same misuse of a scriptural word! The words of Christ Joh. 14:16 are referred to: "I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter." But Christ here calls the Holy Spirit another Comforter in distinction from His, the Son of God's, Person, not in distinction from His Word. Rather, in the same address, Christ says that the Holy Spirit will carry out His ministry of consolation through the words of Christ, v. 26: The Holy Spirit will "remind you of all that I have said to you." "5th. The nature of this influence is evidently different from that effected by the truth, Eph. 1:19; 3:7. And the effect is called a 'new creation,' 'new birth,' etc., etc." In the passage first quoted, however, it stands that we believe by God's omnipotence, "according to the effect of his mighty power," that is, by an act of God's creation. But what it does not say is that this creative act takes place without the Word or apart from the Word. The apostle Paul rejects this thought once and for all when he says: "How shall they believe, of whom they have heard nothing? And how shall they hear without a preacher? So faith comes from by hearing." ⁶⁶¹⁾ In the second passage quoted by A. Hodge, Eph. 3:6-7, it is expressly added that the participation of the heathen in Christ and his kingdom is mediated "by the gospel" (διὰ τὸν εὐαγγέλιον), of which the apostle has become the minister. "6th. Man by nature is dead in sin, and needs such a direct intervention of supernatural power." Here the calling to a scriptural passage is missing. Reference is made to Turretin. But even Turretin cannot help here. Man, however, is dead in sins, and only by a supernatural power does he come to believe the gospel. But that this power operates "directly" or "immediately" is a human opinion, raised without Scriptures and held against the Scriptures on the basis of the rationalistic canon that

661) Rom. 10:14, 17.

a "chariot" is neither necessary nor proper to the Holy Spirit in His work for the salvation of men. The Reformed are only deceiving themselves when they refer to Scripture for their doctrine of the means of grace. They do not have this doctrine from Scripture. The scriptural statements, "faith cometh by hearing," "by the apostles' word," and, "born again by the word," "of water and the Spirit," "God made us saved by the bath of regeneration," "ye have received the Spirit by the preaching of faith"—these scriptural statements do not call out in any man's mind, not even in the mind of the Reformed, the idea that faith, regeneration, the Spirit are wrought or received directly, apart from or without Word and Baptism. The Reformed have come to this doctrine because, as in Christology, they have fallen into the hands of a formidable tyrant. The tyrant in Christology is the human axiom: "*Finitum non est capax infiniti*." The tyrant in the doctrine of the means of grace is the axiom: "Nothing intervenes between the volition of the Spirit and the regeneration of the soul." Under the rule of this tyrant, they interpret the scriptural statements. The inevitable consequence is that all attempted proofs take on the character of sham proofs.

This is also true of Calvin's proof of analogy, which has been inherited like a kind of eternal pest in Reformed theology. We mean the analogy of the physically blind who cannot see without light. Calvin says, "In vain would the light present itself to the blind unless this Spirit of understanding (*mentis*) would open their mental eyes, so that He [the Holy Spirit] may be justly called the key with which the treasures of the kingdom of heaven are unlocked to us; and His illumination constitutes our mental eyes to behold them" ⁶⁶²) This proof of analogy also appeals to recent Reformed theologians. Macpherson quotes⁶⁶³) the words of Calvin just quoted and calls "the position taken by Calvin a most reasonable and thoroughly consistent one." Hodge, too, repeatedly returns to this proof of the immediate effect of the Holy Spirit: "We may admit," he says, "the value and absolute necessity of

662) *Inst. III, 1, 4: Frustra caecis lux se offerret, nisi Spiritus ille intelligentiae aperiret mentis oculos, ut rite elavem vocare queas, quae coelestis regni thesauri nobis reserantur, eiusque illuminationem mentis nostrae aciem ad videndum.* [[Google](#)]

663) *Christian Dogmatics*. Edinburgh, 1898, p. 425.

light, while we deny *that light can open the eyes of the blind*" and: "Men see by the light. Without light vision is impossible. Yet the eyes of the blind are not opened by means of the light."⁶⁶⁴) Likewise Shedd.⁶⁶⁵) And yet, in this proof taken from the effectiveness of natural light, there is a deception. Of course, a natural light brought to a physically blind person from the outside does not help him. The blind cannot see the light. But if in the case of the physically blind there were a light which, although brought to him only from the outside, worked the sight in him, he would be helped by such a light. But such a spiritual light, according to the constant doctrine of Scripture, is the word of the gospel. Christ's sermon is for the purpose of "preaching the vision to the blind" (κηρῆσαι τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν),⁶⁶⁶) and Paul is sent with the gospel among the heathen to "open their eyes" (ἀνοῖξαι οφθαλμούς αὐτῶν).⁶⁶⁷) Faith in the heart is the sight of the previously spiritually blind. But faith comes by the Word of God, both by that which is heard⁶⁶⁸) and by that which is read.⁶⁶⁹) Calvin and all who have adopted his proof without examination are thus deceiving themselves by a *petitio principii*. They should and want to prove that the spiritual enlightenment of the spiritually blind cannot come through the word of truth, the gospel. To prove this, they allow themselves the train of thought: as natural light does not open the eyes of the physically blind, so also the spiritual light of the Word of God does not give sight to the spiritually blind, that is, they assume as already proven that spiritual enlightenment cannot come through the Word of the Gospel. If they were not *a priori* dominated by this thought, they could not even think of using the natural light in its effect as an analog for the effect of the spiritual light of the Word of God.

We have previously reviewed other arguments that are put forward for a spiritual effect outside and alongside the means of grace.⁶⁷⁰) Here we refer back to the main arguments

664) *System. Theol.* II, 700. 685. likewise I. c., p. 703. 714.

665) *Dogmatic Theol.*, II, 506 f.

666) Luke 4:18.

667) Acts 26:18.

668) Joh. 17:20; Rom. 10:15-17; Joh. 20:31.

669) John 20:31; 1 John 5:13. 670) p. 151 ff.

once again from the point of view that in the same a *petitio principii* and thus a self-deception is present. It is said that saving faith must be based on Christ himself, not on the means of grace. In this argument, which is common to the Reformed, the enthusiasts of all shades, and the newer "experiential theologians," it is assumed as proven that faith can and should be based on Christ apart from and in addition to the means of grace. According to Scripture, however, faith in Christ stands only through faith in Christ's Word⁶⁷¹⁾ and without faith in Christ's Word belongs to the realm of imagination.⁶⁷²⁾ The so abundant scolding about hanging on the "dead letter" does not change the fact that one either hangs on the word of Christ or not on Christ at all, but on oneself and one's own thoughts. — It is further said that it is necessary to preserve the honor of God. It is unbearable to ascribe to the means of grace or even to men who handle the means of grace an effect that belongs to God alone. This argument is found in all the Reformed, from Zwingli down to the latest times, and this argument is used to accuse that by the Lutheran doctrine of the means of grace the effect of grace and omnipotence is taken from God and given to external means, at any rate divided between God and the means. Charles Hodge, in his description of the Lutheran doctrine, according to which the efficacy of the Holy Spirit is bound to the Word of God, allows himself the following sentences: "This theory cuts us off from all intercourse with the *Spirit* and all dependence upon *Him* as a personal voluntary agent." "God has given opium its narcotic power, and arsenic its power to corrode the stomach, and left them to men to use or to abuse as they see fit. Beyond giving them their properties, *He has nothing to do with the effects which they produce*. So the *Spirit* has nothing to do with the conviction, conversion, or sanctification of the people of God, or with illuminating, consoling, or guiding them, beyond once for all giving His Word divine power. There it is: men may use or neglect it as they please. The *Spirit* does not incline to use it. *He does not* open their hearts, as He opened the heart of Lydia, to receive the Word. *He* does not enlighten their eyes to

671) Joh. 8:31-32; 17:20.

672) 1 Tim. 6:3 ff.

see wondrous things out of the Law."⁶⁷³) This is a wicked charge, however, and Hodge seems to make it *bona fide*. But even in this argument the *spiritus entusiasticus* is merely moving in a *petitio principii*. He assumes as *a priori* established that the Holy Spirit, if he would preserve his divine propriety and keep divine efficacy in hand, must renounce the "chariot" and not tie his efficacy to the means of grace. Closer: the Reformed theology assumes that the *Spiritus Dei* cannot work through means in such a way that the effect thereby remains proper to him, the Spirit of God. According to the Scriptures, however, it stands in such a way that in the divine effect, which takes place through the means of grace, the gracious and omnipotent effect remains God's alone, but the whole divine effect takes place through the means of grace. There is neither a detachment of the divine effect from God nor a distribution of the divine effect between God are the means of grace. God works the whole, and the means of grace work the whole. This is expressed in the scriptural statements: God saves,⁶⁷⁴) and the Word and baptism save;⁶⁷⁵) faith comes from God's omnipotence⁶⁷⁶) and from the Word preached;⁶⁷⁷) the Spirit makes alive,⁶⁷⁸) and the words Christ speaks are spirit and are life;⁶⁷⁹) Christians are begotten of God,⁶⁸⁰) and Paul begat Onesimus and the Corinthians, namely, by the gospel, διὰ τὸν εὐαγγελίου ὑμᾶς ἐγέννησα,⁶⁸¹) It also comes down to a *petitio principii*, when the Reformed theologians refer to the fact that not all hearers of the Word become faithful, and thus think to have proved that the divine effect for bringing forth faith is to be thought of as separate from the external Word.⁶⁸²) Here it is assumed as proven that the unbelief of those who remain unbelieving under the sound

673) *Systematic Theol.*, III, 482. Cf. also II, 656 f. In passing, Hodge also attributes to the Lutheran Church the synergistic doctrine: "The reason why one man is saved and another not is simply that one resists the super-natural power of the Word and *another does not*." "The difference is in the moral state of those to whom the Word is presented."

674) 2 Tim. 1:9. 675) Acts 11:14; Jam. 1:21; 1 Pet. 3:21.

676) Eph. 1:19. 677) Rom. 10:17. 678) Joh. 6:63 a

679) Joh. 6:63 d. 680) Joh. 1:13. 681) Philemon 10; 1 Cor. 4:15.

682) Zwingli, *Opera* IV, 125; Calvin on the *Consensus Tigurinus*; in Niemeyer, p. 209.

of the word is due to a lack of the divine efficacy of grace in the word. But the Scripture teaches very expressly that the divine efficacy for the production of faith extends also to those who remain unbelieving under the sound of the Word. "How often would I have gathered thy children together — and ye would not." ⁶⁸³ "Ye resist (ἀντιπίπτετέ) the Holy Spirit at all times, as your fathers did, so do ye." ⁶⁸⁴ The matter therefore stands thus: if the fact that many hearers of the Word remain unbelievers is considered in the light of Scripture, and not from the Reformed point of view of an immediate and irresistible action of the Spirit, it proves not the separation but the binding of the *gratia efficax* with the external Word of God.

This is perhaps the best place to remind you that all the terminology used by Reformed theologians to distinguish between "common grace" and "efficacious grace" only serves to obscure the true facts for themselves and others. Alexander Hodge answers the question "How does common differ from efficacious grace?" very definitely: "*Ist.* As to its *subjects*. All men are more or less the subjects of the one; only the elect are subjects of the other." ⁶⁸⁵ But this terminology proves to be unwarranted as soon as we test it against Scripture. Scripture does not limit grace "effectual unto faith and salvation" to the elect, but expressly extends it to the perishing. ⁶⁸⁶ We are further instructed by the Reformed that the effects of common grace, which are also bestowed upon the lost, remain in the natural realm. "The moral and religious effects ascribed to it [*scil.* to common grace] never arise above, so to speak, the natural operations of the mind. The knowledge, the faith, the conviction, the remorse, the sorrow, and the joy, which the Spirit is said to produce by these common operations, are all natural affections or exercises, such as one man may measurably awaken in the minds of other men." ⁶⁸⁷ But this assertion again contradicts Scripture. Scripture also says of

683) Matt. 23:37. 684) Acts 7:51.

685) Outlines, p. 337, so also Charles Hodge, II, 675. 683 ff.

686) Acts 13:46; 7:51; Matt. 23:37.

687) Charles Hodge II, 674; Alexander Hodge, Outlines, p. 337.

those who are lost, that they have received the knowledge of the truth and have been sanctified by Christ's blood.⁶⁸⁸⁾ It should also be noted that by the term *common grace*, all those who, like Charles Hodge, explicitly limit Christ's merit to the elect are deceiving themselves and others.⁶⁸⁹⁾ If the ransom paid by Christ and accepted by God ("the ransom paid and accepted") does not apply to all men, then there is no *common grace* at all, that is, grace extending to all men. Therefore, it is obvious that the whole terminology, according to which a distinction is made between *common grace* and *efficacious grace*, does not belong to the field of scriptural teaching, but to the field of human self-deception. It is only a play with words.

In a summary assessment of the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace, it is also necessary to point out the pernicious consequences that necessarily occur when we men try to detach ourselves from the divine order of the means of grace, that is, when we accept a divine opening of grace and the effect of grace for salvation apart from and alongside the means of grace. We summarize what was said earlier and elaborate on some points.

We men cannot break away from the divine order with impunity, neither in the realm of nature nor in the realm of grace. As far as the kingdom of nature is concerned, it is generally recognized that every violation of the "laws of nature" carries the punishment within itself. If in the realm of grace we try to break away from the divine ordered means of grace, exactly everything is turned upside down. All the Christian concepts that come into consideration in the faith and life of a Christian: the saving grace, the saving faith, the assurance of grace and blessedness, the fellowship with God and Christ, the witness of the Holy Spirit — all these concepts are perverted into their opposite. In place of the saving grace of God, that is, in place of the gracious disposition of God in Christ, *favor Dei propter Christ*, we put an immediate effect of grace in man, a *gratia infusa*, which, however, is a conceit, because the Holy Spirit does not indulge in an immediate infusion of grace. In place of the saving faith, which is always only *vis-à-vis* the

688) Hebr. 10:26, 29. 689) Syst. Theol., II, 323.

the only way in which the Holy Spirit's word of the Gospel comes into being and exists is through human excitement on the basis of an imagined direct effect of the Spirit. The certainty of faith in grace and salvation, which the Holy Spirit always works only on the way of faith in the forgiveness of sins offered in the means of grace, is replaced by the human decision, one can say: a stubbornness, to ascribe to oneself the sonship of God on the basis of imaginary effects of grace, a decision that breaks down miserably and is revealed as self-deception as soon as there is a real recognition of sins with the *terrores conscientiae*. Likewise, a human imagination takes the place of a real personal fellowship with God. As certainly as, according to Scripture, fellowship with Christ and God is imparted only through faith in Christ's Word, so certainly is an intercourse with God on the basis of allegedly immediate spiritual action not an intercourse with God, but an intercourse with oneself and a playing with one's own thoughts. Likewise, the immediacy theory substitutes a *quid pro quo* for the testimony of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit bears inward witness to our sonship with God (*testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum*) by working in our hearts faith in God's testimony of His Son, that is, faith in the outward Word of God. "God's testimony is that which He has begotten of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath such testimony in him (ἐν ἑαυτῷ). He that believeth not God maketh him a liar: for he believeth not the testimony" (the external word is meant) "which God beareth of his Son." ⁶⁹⁰ Putting aside God's testimony of His Son, that is, the outward Word of the Gospel, the Holy Spirit does not bear witness to him, but he issues a testimony to himself concerning his state of grace and sonship to God. With the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, which is present through faith in the Word of the Gospel wrought by the Holy Spirit, the external testimony of the Holy Spirit, *testimonium Spiritus Sancti externum*, which is present in good works, is also lost. Good works are always only the fruits of that faith that has arisen through the word of the gospel (διὰ τὸν λόγον αὐτῶν, *scil.* the apostle's, Jn. 17:20) and therein

690) 1 John 5:9-10.

has its existence. There is no faith that is worked apart from and beside the Word, therefore there are no fruits of it. In short, insofar as we detach ourselves from the means of grace ordered by God and place ourselves on an immediate inner illumination and effect of grace, Christianity is transformed into a groundless subjectivism. Instead of placing man on the rock foundation of the Word of God, we place him on himself. Instead of raising man to a position outside of himself, we push him back to his ego. Instead of imparting to him real intercourse with Christ and through Christ with God, we direct him to intercourse with himself and his own thoughts, moods and aspirations. This subjectivism has been described finely and scientifically, but also crudely and coarsely.⁶⁹¹⁾

One more special type of self-deception should be mentioned, which is bound up with the assumption of the direct effect of the Spirit. It is found on the Reformed side both among the old and newer theologians and in the Reformed confessional writings. This is the attempt to assign to the means of grace the function that they represent, confirm and seal externally that which the Holy Spirit works directly and internally. Even if the saving grace, *efficacious grace*, does not come through the means of grace, the means of grace, especially the sacraments, nevertheless perform the important service of confirming the immediate gift and communication of the Spirit to those who are immediately born again or have become believers, thus attesting to it as genuine.⁶⁹²⁾ There is so little sparing of compliments

691) It has been said that insofar as we detach ourselves from the external Word, we cannot go beyond a "fantasy of God and Christ," beyond "autosuggestion," beyond "projections of the self." Roughly, it has been said: We cannot get beyond the man "who raised himself by his own boot-straps," beyond the cat who plays with his own tail, beyond Munchausen who pulls himself and his horse out of the mire by his own head. Luther, too, wants to characterize the subjectivism introduced with the separation of the spirit from the external word when he uses the well-known coarse expression: "They lead me onto the monkey's tail." (St. L. III, 1693.)

692) This is the name given to the sacraments in Reformed confessional writings (the page numbers according to Niemeyer), Heidelb. Kat., p. 407: "visible sacred warzeichen und Sigill"; I. *Helvet.*, p. 111: "Zeichen göttlicher Gnaden"; *Catech. Genev.*, p. 60: *externa divinae erga nos benevolentiae testificatio, quae visibili signo spirituales gratias figurat, ad obsignandas cordibus nostris Dei promissiones; Consens. Tigurinus*, p. 193: *The noblest purpose of the sacraments is. ut per ea nobis gratiam suam testetur Deus, repraesentet atque obsignet.* [[Google](#)]

paid to the means of grace in this respect that both the old and the newer Reformed are eloquent on this point. Although Zwingli "never read in Scripture" that the sacraments bring grace and the Spirit,⁶⁹³⁾ he will readily admit (he says: *volens ac libens admitto*) "that the sacraments are given for a public testimony (*testimonium publicum*) of the grace that each individual has beforehand."⁶⁹⁴⁾ Exactly so Calvin. Although Calvin also does not want to know anything about grace and the Spirit being brought through the sacraments as through vessels and chariots (*ceu vasculis et plaustis*), at the same time he praises in many words the sacraments for being pledges and landmarks (*arrhae et tesseræ*) that confirm grace as genuine, Calvin thinks that when the doctrines of the sacraments are taught in this way, "the dignity of the sacraments is gloriously praised, their use clearly indicated, and their benefit richly extolled."⁶⁹⁵⁾ Likewise Böhl. He first assures us with great firmness that by such an institution as baptism sin cannot be washed away and regeneration wrought. He says, "The water" (of baptism) "cannot do such high things."⁶⁹⁶⁾ But then he stresses just as firmly that baptism is a "sign," indeed "a clear proof" that God is willing to wash us inwardly from sins through Christ's blood and Spirit. Baptism is "signum ablutionis". "As water cleanses us from outward filth, so Christ's blood and Spirit cleanses us from all our sins."⁶⁹⁷⁾ Nor does Böhl allow the word of the Gospel to be a medium of forgiveness of sins and of the Spirit's action, but he makes it a sign of piety directly wrought beforehand. He says: " Only to those made alive by the Holy Spirit

693) *Fidei ratio*; Niemeyer, p. 24. 694) op. cit. p. 25.

695) *Inst.* IV, 14, 17. 696) *Dogmatik*, p. 560.

697) op. cit., p. 558. Böhl only refers to Acts 22:16; Eph. 5:26; Tit. 3:5 without printing the passages. If he had printed the scriptures, his theory of signs would have been refuted. The passages do not say of the water of baptism that it cleanses from outward filth, but on the contrary that it washes away sins, cleanses from sins and saves: Acts 22:16: "Be baptized and wash away your sins"; Eph. 5:26: Christ cleansed the church "by the bath of water in the Word"; Tit. 3:5: God "saved us by the bath of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit".

are those assurances of Jesus that the Word cleanses them"; "where it [the Word] meets with like personalities enlightened by the Holy Spirit in regeneration" (directly) "this Word of Scripture cannot fail to make an impression on them." ⁶⁹⁸⁾ In short, the Reformed seek to cover the deficit in their doctrine of the means of grace by declaring the God-ordained means of grace, especially the sacraments, to be external signs, images, and thus stamps of authenticity of the inner, immediately conferred grace. But here there is a great self-deception. The means of grace do not know of any direct grace, but only of a grace which they themselves convey, that is, bring, offer and give. The forgiveness of sins and salvation is not signified or pictured by the gospel, but proclaimed and promised so that it may be believed by the hearers.⁶⁹⁹⁾ Nor is faith imaged or signified by the gospel, but comes or arises from the sermon of the gospel.⁷⁰⁰⁾ Neither does regeneration have its outward sign in the means of grace, but is wrought by the word and baptism.⁷⁰¹⁾ And as for the Spirit, it likewise is received by faith through the sermon,⁷⁰²⁾ not signified or outwardly represented. It stands, therefore, indeed, that the means of grace do not picture and confirm immediate grace, but exhibit the testimony of inauthenticity to every "grace," to every "faith," to every "regeneration," which any one thinks he has obtained before the means of grace, beside the means of grace, and without the means of grace. Therefore, the Reformed, insofar as they teach an immediate revelation of grace and effect of grace, have no right to call the sacraments signs and seals of grace. That they use these expressions is again proof of the fact that certain expressions are perpetuated from generation to generation without any account being given of the meaning of the expressions. The historians of dogma who leave the use of the expressions "sign," "seal," etc. among the Reformed unchallenged also betray a lack of proper judgment. Only the Lutheran church with its doctrine that through Christ's substitutionary satisfaction for all men there is forgiveness of sins,






698) Op. cit., p. 445 f. 699) Luke 24:47; Acts 13:46.

700) Joh. 17:20; Rom. 10:17. 701) 1 Pet. 1:23; Tit. 3:5.

702) Gal. 3:2, 5.

and that God promises this forgiveness of sins through the means of grace to all who use them, has a right to call also the sacraments "signs and testimonies of the [gracious] will" of God, as is done in the Augsburg Confession and in the other confessions.⁷⁰³⁾


If one wants to call our judgment that through the Reformed doctrine of the direct action of the Spirit personal Christianity is dissolved into

703) The terminology of the 13th article of the Augsburg Confession, that the sacraments are "signs and testimonies of divine will toward us, to awaken and strengthen our faith thereby," is to be recognized and held as classical and entirely appropriate. The terminology is based on the universal and perfect reconciliation of the world, which was accomplished through Christ. As God-ordered signs of this fact, the sacraments are never "empty signs," but they testify to everyone who uses them, certainly and infallibly, that God is gracious to him, for which reason faith also belongs to the salutary use of the sacraments on the part of man. As signs ordered by God, they are the hands of God, from which faith should and can take the forgiveness of sins. As Luther says in the Large Catechism (458, 55 [[Trigl. 693, Art. III, 55](#) sign [the sacraments], to comfort and raise our conscience as long as we live here." Thus, in the Lutheran Confession, for the characterization of the sacraments, the expressions "sign of grace," "sign of the New Testament," "sign of the forgiveness of sins," etc., are often repeated, *Apol.* 173, 42 [[Trigl. 261, XII, 42](#) Sacramenta sunt signa novi testamenti, hoc est, signa remissionis peccatorum; 204, 14 [[Ibid., 311, XIII, 14](#) Sacramenta proprie sunt signa novi testamenti et sunt testimonia gratiae et remissionis peccatorum; 259, 49 [[Ibid. 401, XXIV, 49](#) Sacramentum ad hoc institutum est, ut sit sigillum et testimonium gratuita remissionis peccatorum, ideoque debeat pavidas conscientias admonere, ut vere statuant et credant, sibi gratis remitti peccata; 264, 69 [[Ibid. 409, XXII, 69](#) Sacramenta sunt signa voluntatis Dei erga nos, non tantum signa sunt hominum inter sese, et recte definiunt sacramenta in novo testamento esse signa gratiae, [[Google](#)] in the German text: "And those are right who say that the sacraments are *signa gratia*, that is, the sacraments are signs of grace." It is terminology that does not accurately describe the situation when the difference between the Lutheran Church and the Reformed fellowships is determined to the effect that for the Reformed the sacraments (and the means of grace in general) are only signs of divine grace, whereas according to Lutheran doctrine the means of grace also offer and give what they signify. The situation is rather that the Reformed, due to their doctrine of *gratia particularis* and the direct communication of grace, do not find the means of grace signs, but rather sources of doubt concerning the gracious disposition of God. They can mean both wrath and grace to the individual man who uses them, under the condition of particular grace and direct spiritual effect.

human subjectivism and amounts to self-deception a "hard address," we feel impelled to make a concession first. We concede that, from the natural human point of view, all efforts to obtain the grace of God, the Holy Spirit, and personal fellowship with God, apart from and in addition to the divinely ordained means of grace, command a certain respect when these efforts give the impression of natural religious seriousness. Truly, one cannot deny natural respect to monks like Luther, who pursue inward fellowship with God in the way of monasticism with all seriousness. The same natural respect is involuntarily shown to serious Quakers even in their extreme, the "silent meetings". Nor do we find it above us to sneer at the revival meetings of the Negroes when they try to summon "the Holy Spirit" with wild shouting and repulsive gestures. The ridicule which unbelieving newspaper writers pour upon the revival meetings of the Negroes and the whites fills us with disgust. But all natural respect for these human-serious efforts for the Spirit and the fellowship of God must not cloud our scriptural judgment that all intercourse with God and all personal fellowship with God apart from and alongside the means of grace is based on self-deception. It stands clear from Holy Scriptures that the Holy Spirit does not engage in an immediate effect of faith. The Holy Spirit does not follow Zwingli's *Fidei Ratio*, in which it reminds that he (the Holy Spirit) does not need a *vehiculum*. The Holy Spirit remains with his *vehiculum* because he has declared through his instrument, the apostle Paul, that he is received by faith through the sermon. The Holy Spirit also does not follow Shedd, Hodge and Böhl, who instruct him that *efficacious grace* does not take place through the means of grace, but directly. The Holy Spirit also behaves in a thoroughly recalcitrant manner with regard to the "silent meetings" of the Quakers, because He does not want to be effective through silence, but through the proclamation of the Gospel. He is, however, immediately present when the Quakers, in contradiction with their principle, diligently read the Bible, that is, the external Word. The Holy Spirit also gives nothing for the often very noisy meetings of the revival preachers. He does not come through shouting and noise. He also gives nothing for drums

and flags. But he is immediately present when Christ, crucified to pay for the sins of the world, and faith in him as the way to salvation are proclaimed in these gatherings. In short, the Holy Spirit insists on his *vehiculum*. Insofar as one puts aside this *vehiculum*, the Holy Spirit is not there, but a product of another spirit and of one's own spirit is awakened, which one mistakenly takes for a product of the Holy Spirit and for the Holy Spirit Himself. Luther's judgment on the efforts of all those who assume a direct efficacy of the Holy Spirit is scriptural: "You must, they say, have the Spirit; but how I can have the Spirit they will not let me have. Now, how can I get the Spirit and believe, unless the Word of God is preached to me and the sacraments are administered? I must have the means; for faith cometh by hearing, but hearing by the oral word, Rom. 10:17." ⁷⁰⁴⁾

But to the summary evaluation of the Reformed means of grace doctrine belongs also the indication of a happy inconsistency, whereby the means of grace disavowed in theory are restituted in practice. This happens in more than one way. First of all, it must be remembered that the Reformed teachers and pastors themselves are not silent, but speak and write abundantly of God's mercy in Christ, of Christ's atoning sacrifice for man, of God's Word to be heard and read, and so on. ⁷⁰⁵⁾ This is admittedly inconsistent on the premise that spirit, faith and regeneration do not come through the external word. But God is very gracious and the Holy Spirit very faithful. Although men erroneously say that He directly works that by which a man is actually saved (efficacious grace), He uses the Word preached by them, insofar as it is the Word of God, as a means by which He produces faith and regeneration. — On the other hand, it must be remembered that the Reformed teachers do not remain consistent even in the exposition of their doctrine of the means of grace. On the one hand, Calvin warns against wanting to recognize eternal election from the external word of the Gospel, ⁷⁰⁶⁾ and the Geneva Catechism inculcates not to seek salvation in the sacraments. ⁷⁰⁷⁾ But besides this we find both in

704) St. L. III, 1695 f. 705) Smalc. Art., M. 322, 6. [Trigl. 495, 6 ]

706) *Inst.* III, 24, 8. 707) Niemeyer, p. 161.

Calvin as well as in the Geneva Catechism and the other Reformed confessional writings that they call the external word the foundation of faith, exhort⁷⁰⁸⁾ to hear and read it, and also refer to word and sacrament as means by which faith comes and is strengthened.⁷⁰⁹⁾ Whoever leaves aside what is wrong and accepts only what is right — which undoubtedly happens in many cases — remains in the land of truth. The Reformed fully lay down their arms when it is necessary to free those who are challenged about their election from the distress of conscience. Then they remain silent about particular grace and immediate effectiveness and refer the fearful to the external statements of Scripture, in which the grace of God in Christ is promised to all men without exception. This, of course, is again very inconsistent. But insofar as, in this inconsistency, divine truth forces itself forth, if only in accommodation to the way of speaking of Scripture, the Holy Spirit has an opportunity to direct His work in producing faith in the Gospel.

This circumstance must not, of course, lead us to indifference with regard to the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace. We believe that we have amply demonstrated that it is contrary to Scripture and that it brings about a complete revolution in the relationship that God has established between Himself and man, in that it does not place man on the word of grace and thus on Christ and God Himself, but instructs him to place himself on himself and his own activity. Therefore, indifferentism is certainly not in place here. Rather, it is necessary to deny the assumption of a spiritual effect apart from and besides the Word any justification within the Christian church, to fight it as a foreign body that has penetrated the Christian doctrine and as a mortal enemy of the personal life of faith. Moreover, the representatives of this

708) Calvin, *Inst.* III, 2, 6: *Verbum basis est, qua fulcitur et sustinetur [fides] ; unde si declinat, corrui. Tolle igitur verbum et nulla iam restabit fides.* [[Google](#)]

709) *Confessio Anglicana* XXV (Niemeyer, p. 606): *Sacramenta a Christo instituta non tantum sunt notae professionis Christianorum, sed certa quaedam potius testimonia et efficacia signa gratiae atque bonae in nos voluntatis Dei, per quae invisibiliter ipse in nos operatur, nostramque fidem in se non solum excitat, verum etiam confirmat.* [One notices here the connection to the wording of the 13th article of the Augsburg Confession.]

misconception are by no means always peaceful people. They rather go on the warpath and say all kinds of evil things about the Biblical truth. They claim, as has already been repeatedly pointed out, that through the doctrine of a divine revelation of grace and the effect of grace, which takes place only through the Word of God and the sacraments, an external Christianity is cultivated, a "cession" of the divine power of the Holy Spirit to the Word of Scripture takes place⁷¹⁰ and in general that which is God's alone is transferred to men.⁷¹¹ To this end, their polemics not infrequently take on an impure character. They make use of the evil procedure of the Council of Trent.⁷¹² They combine the biblical truth with an obvious error, e.g. with the Roman doctrine of the effect of the sacraments *ex opere operato*, and pronounce the condemnation sentence on both at the same time — on the truth and on the error. Beza, for example, proceeds in this way. Beza calls it "a palpable error, drawn from the fetid puddles of the scholastics, when the power to communicate grace is attributed to God as author, but as a tool to the sacraments."⁷¹³ We must also point out another extremely ugly side effect. It is spiritual arrogance. Because those who cherish the idea of an activity of the Holy Spirit apart from and in addition to the means of grace deal with imaginary, self-made magnitudes, they consider themselves, as experience abundantly proves, to be truly spiritual people and Christians of the first class, while they regard Christians who remain in simple faith in the means of grace ordered by God as mere intellectualists, at most as Christians of the second class. Zwingli expresses his disdain for Luther's Christianity with the words: "I want to show you [Luther] that you have not recognized the broad, glorious light of

710) Böhl, Dogmatik, p. 440.

711) So Calvin, *Inst.* IV, 14, 17: *Notandum, quod externa actione figurat et testatur minister, Deum intus peragere, ne ad hominem mortalem trahatur, quod Deus sibi uni vindicat.* [[Google](#)] Cf. Calvin in Niemeyer, p. 208.

712) Sess. VI, can. 10.

713) Quenstedt II, 1131: *Beza in Actis Colloq. Mompelgart., Pastor 2, p. 115, vocat, errorem palpabilem ex foetidis Scholasticorum lacunis haustum, si vis conferendae gratiae principalis quidem Deo, instrumentalis autem sacramentis tribuatur* [[Google](#)].

the gospel, because you have forgotten it again.”⁷¹⁴) The same phenomenon appears with the enthusiasts who appeared within the Lutheran church in old and new times.⁷¹⁵) This high self-assessment holds its own as long as there is no serious distress of conscience. If the latter occurs, the arrogance ends in despair, unless a conversion to Lutheran territory takes place, that is, unless faith is based on the external word that has been despised until now.

Is there an essential difference between the representatives of the immediate spiritual realm? Many things have been written about the difference between Zwingli and Calvin. In the history of dogma there is a tendency to assume an essential difference between Zwingli and Calvin. For example, the third edition of Winer's "Comparative Exposition" states:⁷¹⁶) "The older Reformed confessions, which were written by Zwingli, teach differently about the sacraments. Zwingli's *Fidei ratio*: *Credo, imo scio, omnia sacramenta tam abesse, ut gratiam conferant, ut ne adferant quidem aut dispensent.* ["I believe, nay, I know, that all the sacraments are so far from conferring grace, that they do not even bring or dispense them."] The doctrine of the later ones, influenced by Calvin, on the other hand, can be summarized approximately under the following points of view: 1. *symbola mystica*; 2. They are signs of his grace instituted by God, thus more than mere moral presentations of the heavenly; such could also be introduced by the church; 3. They are signs of what the Holy Spirit works inwardly; sign and effect coincide." This is misleading. Zwingli, too, claims for his doctrine of the sacraments that the sacraments are signs or symbols of the inner work of the Spirit instituted by God, and that sign and effect coincide, namely, in the sense that in the elect the signs depict and represent what is directly wrought by the Spirit.⁷¹⁷) But Calvin does not get beyond this either. In fact, this is how it stands: There is no basis for a real disagreement between

714) St. L. XX, 1131. 715) Cf. II, 633 ff. 716) p. 117.

717) We can convince ourselves of this by reading only a few pages in Zwingli's Fidei ratio. In Niemeyer, *De sacramentis*, p. 25. 26: *Credo, o Caesar, sacramentum esse sacrae rei, hoc est, factae gratiae, signum. Credo esse invisibilis gratiae, quae scilicet Dei munere facta et data est, visibilem figuram, hoc est, visibile exemplum, quod tamen fere analogiam quandam rei per Spiritum gestae prae se fert*. Therefore the sacraments are *religiose colenda, hoc est, in pretio habenda*. [Google]

Zwingli and Calvin. It stands here with the doctrine of the means of grace as with the doctrines of Christ's person and work and of the Lord's Supper. In these doctrines Zwingli and Calvin and all the Reformed remain united as long as they agree that Christ's body has only a local and visible mode of being or presence. Thus also in the doctrine of the means of grace Zwingli and Calvin cannot differ essentially, because both agree in two things: first, that Christ's merit and saving grace do not go to all who use the means of grace; second, that saving grace is not bound to the means of grace. Therefore, "sign" and "effect" never coincide for either. According to Scripture, the signs are signs of grace for all, according to Zwingli and Calvin only for the elect. According to Scripture, the saving work of the Spirit takes place through the Word and the sacraments. According to Zwingli and Calvin, this effect is not bound to the means of grace. Sign and effect come together only if the teaching of Scripture is adhered to, that the grace of God in Christ is not particular, but universal, and the Holy Spirit is active through the means of grace in all for the production of saving faith in the grace offered. Guericke points to Calvin's definition of the sacraments,⁷¹⁸⁾ which sounds much fuller than Zwingli's, but then continues, "But it is really more so in appearance than in essence. Even according to Calvin's doctrine and the symbolic Reformed doctrine shaped under Calvin's influence, the visible signs in the sacraments do not communicate as such an invisible divine thing, but only represent it in some way and seal it; according to Calvin, participation in the sacrament is only incidentally connected, although quite independently of the external signs,⁷¹⁹⁾ with a communicating effect of the Holy Spirit, but not for all participants, but only for the believers, for the predestinated; for all

718) *Inst. IV, 14, 1: Quid sit sacramentum. Videtur autem mihi haec simplex et propria fore definitio, si dixerimus, externum esse symbolum, quo benevolentiae erga nos suae promissiones conscientias nostris Dominus obsignat ad sustinendam fidei nostrae imbecillitatem, et nos vicissim pietatem erga eum nostram tam coram eo et angelis quam apud homines testamur. Licet etiam maiore compendio aliter definire: ut vocetur divinae in nos gratiae testimonium externo signo confirmatum, cum mutua nostrae erga ipsum pietatis testificatione.* [Google]

719) "Ab externo ministerio distincta." *Inst. IV, 14, 17.*

others, the sacraments themselves are nothing but dead, completely ineffective signs. From the sacrament as a sensual sign, the sanctifying and saving power is and remains sharply separated, even according to Calvin's as well as Zwingli's doctrine."⁷²⁰⁾

There is no factual justification at all to assume an essential difference between the representatives of the direct effect of the spirit, no matter who they are and whether they belong to the 16th or 20th century. Luther has been reproached for putting all those who assume a spiritual effect "without and before the word" into one class. In particular, it has been regretted by more recent Lutherans that Luther saw the same "enthusiast" in Zwingli as in Carlstadt and the Zwickau prophets.⁷²¹⁾ But even if we acknowledge differences — and indeed great differences — in the outward manner of appearance, we cannot escape the perception that Zwingli, for example, agreed with Thomas Münzer in the following matters: 1. In the doctrine that the Holy Spirit must reach the spirit of man without means; 2. In the accusation that Luther, because he did not want to know of any spiritual revelation and spiritual activity apart from and besides the outward word of the gospel, did not understand the gospel correctly and corrupted the true reformation of the church. Both therefore also thought that they were called to be reformers besides and above Luther. Muenzer called himself "Martin's rival with the Lord". Zwingli reminded them that Luther was only "one honest Ajax or Diomedes" among many heroes in the Greek camp.⁷²²⁾ Both wanted to reform the state and the social relationships with the gospel, as they understood it miraculously. We would also leave the standpoint of objective judgment if we did not also want to bring the newer Reformed dogmatists and the "experiential theologians" who call themselves Lutheran under the general title of "enthusiasts". As Münzer wanted to lead "without any means" "into the spirit and to God" and Zwingli claimed that the Holy Spirit reaches "ad solum spiritum" "without a chariot", so also Hodge says: "Nothing intervenes between the volition of the Spirit and the regeneration of the soul"⁷²³⁾ and Shedd: "The influence of the Holy Spirit is directly upon

720) Symbolik 2, p. 437 ff.

721) Meusel VII, 403.

722) St. L. XX, 1134. 723) System. Theol., II, 684.

the human spirit, and is independent even of the Word itself⁷²⁴⁾ and Ihmels: "Even today only that is real faith in Jesus Christ, which is forced upon man by His appearance itself." ⁷²⁵⁾ In short, it stands thus: All who hold the πρώτον ψενδος that the Holy Spirit works faith or regeneration apart from and alongside the external Word belong in one class. The existing differences reduce themselves to a more or less consistent carrying out of the fundamental error. The Reformed and Lutheran doctrines of the means of grace form complete opposites. The former maintains that the actual saving effect of the Spirit is not to be tied to the means of grace. The latter declares everything to be deception and fraud of the evil spirit, which is praised by the spirit without word and sacrament. These opposites have their type in Zwingli on the one hand and in Luther on the other.

Why this difference between Zwingli and Luther? Why Luther — as a recent Reformed theologian⁷²⁶⁾ put it — "the kind of faith resting directly on word and sacrament", while Zwingli warns against clinging to such external things as word and sacrament? The reason for the difference is this: Luther became the reformer of the church through deep confession of sin and under years of terrible anguish of conscience, and learned in God's school that the conscience, struck by God's law, can become certain of God's grace in no other way than by faithful grasping of the grace promised in the objective Word of God and in the objective sacraments. Hence "Luther's way of faith resting directly on word and sacrament." Again and again Luther says: Experto crede Ruperto: "Where you do not seek forgiveness in the Word, you will gape in vain toward heaven for grace, or, as they say, inward forgiveness." ⁷²⁷⁾ Zwingli's "Reformation," on the other hand, did not initially arise from anguish of conscience, but grew out of the soil of humanism. Zwingli did not want both to quiet a conscience stricken by God's law by witnessing to the gospel of the forgiveness of sins, but rather to bring about an improvement in the decayed morals,

724) Dogmatic Theol., II, 501. 725) Zentralfragen, p. 89.

726) E. F. Karl Müller, RE. ³ XV, 599. 727) St. L. XIX, 946.

which was the program of humanism and especially of Erasmus. Because Zwingli had not, like Luther, come to despair of himself and all his own actions under the *terrores conscientiae*, he had also not come to the realization through experience that nothing else saves from doubt and despair than the faithful grasp of the objective divine promise of grace, which is present in the external word of the gospel and in the sacraments. Hence Zwingli's disdain, even rejection, of the objective means of grace when it comes to the question of how man becomes partaker and certain of grace and the Spirit. The humanistic starting point of Zwingli's Reformation is fairly universally recognized in recent dogma history. Seeberg says:⁷²⁸⁾ "Luther at that time" (when Zwingli took up the pastorate in Glarus in 1506) "sought 'a gracious God' in the monastery. When Luther began the great struggle in 1517, Zwingli was searching the Scriptures 'at Einsiedeln in the dark forest' for the true philosophy of Christ. The former stepped out of the solitude of inner struggles into the great struggle of the church; the latter had come to know men and life when he devoted himself to his studies in solitude. The religious need of his own heart guided Luther; the personal experience of faith made him a Reformer. Zwingli followed the counsel of Erasmus and the humanistic train of the time when he turned to the 'very purest sources'. He had a different starting point than Luther, namely the humanistic critical mood towards the church and the doctrine, the return to the sources or the conviction that only the biblical doctrine is truth. These were ideas that Erasmus espoused, and to which the majority of the educated cheered." Seeberg goes on to say,⁷²⁹⁾ that the "undeniable difference" between Zwingli and Luther "can be understood from the fact that Zwingli owes the impetus for his thoughts to the Erasmian Enlightenment. ... In all areas the medieval and humanistic barrier in Zwingli's doctrines and work confronts us, and in such a way that it establishes the difference to Luther's thoughts." Capito wrote to Bullinger in 1536 that he (Capito) and Zwingli had drawn their reformation thoughts "*ex Erasmi consuetudine*" before Luther's appearance (*antequam Lutherus in lucem emerserat*).⁷³⁰⁾ That Zwingli never completely came out of the Erasmian ideas

728) *Dogmengesch.* II, 294.

729) A. a. O., p. 304.

730) *Gieseler* III, 1, p. 138.

is also evident from the fact that shortly before his death, in his *Christianae Fidei Expositio*, he included Hercules, Theseus, Socrates, Aristides, Numa, etc. among the saints in heaven, in addition to the saints of the Old and New Testaments, in addition to Isaiah and Elijah, and in addition to Peter and Paul.⁷³¹⁾ Because Luther had formed a favorable opinion of Zwingli and his comrades after the colloquium in Marburg, because there they "indulged in so many good articles," he was very shocked when he saw Zwingli's writing in which he places the mentioned heathens among the Christian saints in heaven. Luther wrote on it the words which, under the circumstances, have been resented by many: "Tell me, you who would be a Christian, what need is there of Baptism, the Sacrament, Christ, the Gospel, or the Prophets, and Holy Scripture, if such godless heathen, Socrates, Aristides, even the dreadful Numa, who through the devil's instigation was the first to institute the idolatry of all nations at Rome, as St. Augustine reports in *De civitate Dei*, and Scipio, the Epicurean, are blessed and saints with the patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles in heaven, though they knew nothing of God, Scripture, the Gospel, Christ, Baptism, and the Sacrament, or the Christian faith? What can such a writer, preacher, and teacher believe of the Christian faith other than that it is on a level with all religions and that everyone can be saved by whatever he believes, even an idolater and Epicurean like Numa and Scipio?"⁷³²⁾ Luther therefore rejects the claim that Zwingli died as a Christian martyr, especially since he "also had a worldly evil cause, since he acted maliciously against the other part by blocking the roads."⁷³³⁾ But Luther adds: "I would like very much that he [Zwingli] would be chastised according to these passages [1 Cor. 5:5; 11:32: 'chastened by the Lord, that we be not condemned with the world']; for I was and still am exceedingly sorry for such his misfortune."⁷³⁴⁾ Although Zwingli very decidedly — one must say in a morbid way — emphasized his independence from Luther,⁷³⁵⁾ he nevertheless

731) [St. L. XX, 1767](#). 732) [A. a. O.. S. 1767](#).

733) "The five Catholic cantons were deprived of their supply by occupying the roads; this caused them to wage war against the Zurichers." ([St. L. XX, 1777:note 3](#).)

734) [op. cit., p. 1777](#).

735) Uslegen der Schlußreden 1523. Uslegung des XVIII. Art. (Opp. 1, 253): "Prior to and before ever any man in our neighborhood knew anything of Luther's name,

embodied much of the Evangelical truth brought to light by Luther into his writings.⁷³⁶⁾

But even apart from the Erasmian origin in Zwingli, the Reformed doctrine, as a result of the assumption of a direct effect of the spirit, places man on his own working and doing. That the Reformed doctrine, in contrast to the Lutheran, bears a "legal character" is quite generally conceded. Schneckenburger says that in the Reformed doctrine of the appropriation of salvation "an approximation to Catholic doctrine" is discernible.⁷³⁷⁾ Seeberg remarks: "Zwingli does not feel that the law is an expression of a different worldview; imperceptibly the gospel becomes the 'nüwen Gesetz.'" ⁷³⁸⁾ Rarely, however, is it pointed out by more recent theologians that this "legalistic stamp" or this "approach to Catholic doctrine" is a necessary consequence of the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace. We must, if we are to remain factual, give an even sharper version to the judgment that reads "legal stamp." We must say that the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace, unless it is broken by inconsistency, places man not merely in part, but wholly, on his own activity and works. This judgment therefore corresponds to the real state of affairs, because the immediate effect of the Spirit, which Reformed theology insists upon from Zwingli to Shedd, is a *non-ens*, existing only in the human imagination. If, however, the Holy Spirit does not concede to the immediate effect of the Spirit — and this stands firm from the Holy Scriptures — then nothing remains but that man produces from himself such states of soul, moods, changes and works which have an outward resemblance to the genuine product of the Holy Spirit. Thus

I had begun to preach the Gospel of Christ in the year 1516." op. cit., p. 254: "For who has taught me to preach the Gospel and to preach an entire Evangelist serially? Was it perhaps Luther? But indeed I began such preaching before ever I had heard Luther mentioned." By "Evangelion" Zwingli understood sermons, rather than on the pericopes, on the "Evangelion, described by Matthäo." For him, "Luther's writing helped me little at that time toward the preaching of Matthew."

736) Seeberg, II, 294 f. also insists on this: "Zwingli found Luther's thoughts in Scripture after he had learned them from Luther."

737) Vergleichende Darstellung, p. 160. 738) Dogmengesch. II, 299.

the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace is driven with inner necessity into the Roman doctrine of works. Recently, however, it has been strongly emphasized that Reformed theology has an antidote to the Roman doctrine of works in its doctrine of predestination. Seeberg remarks: "In contrast to the Roman doctrine of merit and works Zwingli developed his doctrine of predestination",⁷³⁹⁾ and of Zwingli's "determinism" Seeberg judges that "it has proven itself as a weapon against the Roman teaching of salvation by works".⁷⁴⁰⁾ Schneckenburger also sees in the Reformed doctrine of predestination the factor that delivers the Reformed doctrine from the Roman camp and secures for it a place "in the soil of Evangelical Protestantism." Schneckenburger says: "Out of the soil of Evangelical Protestantism, however, it [the Reformed doctrine] remains only through the idea of predestination and the irresistible effect of grace."⁷⁴¹⁾ Even more effusively, with regard to the alleged anti-Roman character of the Reformed doctrine of predestination, Meusel reads: "Unquestionably, this doctrine of predestination of Zwingli has thoroughly eliminated the synergism of the Roman Church."⁷⁴²⁾ But this is a deception. Just the opposite is the case. The "predestination" assumed by Reformed theology, just like the immediate spiritual effect, is only a human imagination, because it includes in itself the assumption of the immediate spiritual effect. But no real effect of grace emanates from an imaginary factor. There is, however, an eternal election. But just as this eternal election did not take place directly, but by the way of the means of grace,⁷⁴³⁾ so it also does not take place directly in time, but by the way of the means of grace,⁷⁴⁴⁾ as has already been shown in the outline⁷⁴⁵⁾ and is to be explained in more detail in the doctrine of election. Therefore, the election taught by the Reformers, which includes the assumption of the direct effect of the Spirit, which does not exist at all, does not form a "counterweight" against the Roman doctrine of works, but only pushes us even more into our own human activity. It is necessary to produce such moods, changes and works by one's own action, which seem to be marks

739) op. cit., II, p. 300. 740) op. cit., p. 304.

741) op. cit., p. 160. 742) *Handlexikon* VII, 405.

743) 2 Thess. 2:13. 744) 2 Thess. 2:14; 2 Tim. 1:9-10.

745) II, 498.

of eternal election. There is only one deliverancer from the works doctrine for Reformed theology. That is the defection to Lutheran territory. It actually carries out this conversion, in that it, including Calvin, finally rejects those who are challenged because of their election from the general grace as it is testified in the means of grace. Schneckenburger also admits this. After pointing out the various means that Reformed theology uses in vain to remove doubts about grace and election, he continues: "Hence the admonition to make use of God's general promises, to look at His predestination only in Christ, the means of its realization, not to offend God by mistrusting His grace, and the like. But all this, strictly speaking, can be said only from the Lutheran point of view, so that here the practice is driven out of the same. [According to Reformed doctrines] the general grace of God, the merit of Christ, precisely cannot concern me."⁷⁴⁶⁾

We have repeatedly referred from Schneckenburger's Vergleichende Darstellung des lutherischen und reformierten Lehrbegriffs. Schneckenburger errs in some matters. We have already seen that in his presentation he reckons with predestination, as it is taught by the Reformed, as a really existing factor, whereas it belongs entirely to the realm of imagination. Nevertheless, Schneckenburger's book remains worth reading. We therefore place here another section⁷⁴⁷⁾, in which two things are treated: 1. that Reformed theology seeks to answer the question of grace and election by reflection from regeneration and good works, and is driven by the seriousness of practice from a Lutheran standpoint; 2. that within the Lutheran Church, through Pietism, a defection from Reformed territory has been in the offing, and that modern theology in principle walks entirely in Reformed paths. Schneckenburger says: "In Reformed congregations much more frequently than in Lutheran ones is found the fear of having committed the sin against the Holy Spirit. This is declared by the [Reformed] dogma of the impossibility of a total fall in the truly

746) op. cit., p. 260 ff. 747) Part I, p. 233 ff. 265 ff.

born again⁷⁴⁸⁾ and from the assumption of deceptions of the religious self-consciousness.⁷⁴⁹⁾ Such a one, who formerly believed himself to be entitled to consider himself a born-again, is now seized by a real recognition of sin, overcome by a feeling of guilt, abandoned by uplifting sensations,⁷⁵⁰⁾ and there, with the wavering of that confidence, there enters much more the desperation of being a *reprob*, of having had only a deception in those earlier experiences, or rather of having tasted the heavenly goods, but only tasted and not possessed them. The more vivid those experiences were, the more the subject may have cause to reproach himself for the abuse of the grace enjoyed, the greater the distance is now felt, and the sin against the Holy Spirit, which leaves no room for repentance, permits no conversion, seems committed. Here the instruction is constantly given to convince such minds that this fear alone testifies to the contrary and points to the presence of a germ of faith.⁷⁵¹⁾ This is seldom enough for me; for the fear is a present one, filling the mind,⁷⁵²⁾ especially since even according to the [Reformed] system it can be objected again and again with justification that this fear could just as well be the anticipation of hell as the fear of repentance.⁷⁵³⁾ If it is also true of the positive feeling of grace that it can deceive, how much more of this? Moreover, in the case of the wavering of the immediate self-consciousness, which is to be given a firm basis by the idea of predestination, the idea of reprobation is readily added as the one corresponding to the depressed consciousness. In this case, consolation becomes difficult, and the symbols already know much to speak of the *periculosissima praedestinationis tentatio*. There it is a matter of showing that no one can be convinced of his election, as conversely also of his rejection, that therefore at any rate here an error occurs if someone

748) Cf. the Dordrecht Resolutions; in Niemeyer, p. 716. Cited [II, 561, note 1304](#). Calvin, *Inst.* III, 2, 12.

749) Calvin, *Inst.* III, 24, 8. 750) Cromwell; cf. p. 108.

751) This is not wrong in itself. If there is a desire for the grace of God in Christ in a terrified sinner, faith itself is present, and the troubled one is to be told this. Cf. [II, 533](#).

752) How the case is to be treated according to the Scriptures is set out in vol. [II, 533 f.](#)

753) According to Calvin, *Inst.* III, 24, 8, to a part of the hearers of the gospel it is preached for the purpose of "heavier damnation".

thinks himself rejected without further ado. But the possibility always remains that the one who is afraid is really a rejected one, and the very imagined possibility has a paralyzing effect on every upswing. Hence the admonition to make use of God's general promises, to look at his predestination only in Christ, the means of its realization, not to offend God by mistrusting his grace, and so on. But all this, strictly speaking, can be said only from the Lutheran standpoint, so that here the practice will drift out to the same [*scil.* to the Lutheran standpoint]. The general grace of God, the merit of Christ can [according to Reformed doctrine] be of no concern to me, because I am a reprobate. In order to comfort the soul against such thoughts, it is always necessary to find positive reasons for my not being rejected, but of course only reasons that lie in my subjective quality as a certain one through God's grace. Then again, all kinds of earlier experiences of grace are referred to, which can have truth after all, although this inner truth of experience is not decisive; it is given to consider how God leads his chosen ones, according to Christ's example, into grave anxiety, and how the challenge speaks for the sonship of God. But in the end, of course, since the question always recurs whether it is a challenge or the beginning of damnation, nothing remains but the reference to that subjective behavior which alone has truth and is the right mark of election. The exhortation is to active obedience, to the practice of godliness, to diligence in good works, that is, to the power of action, the actions of which alone can bring about the satisfactory result for self-consciousness. But in most cases this also proves to be an inadequate means of consolation, which means to refute the inner doubt by one's own objective action, as if that very doubt did not invalidate every true activity. However, in order to drive to action in any case, the motives discussed above are applied and the encouragements to godly activity, e.g. by Hyperius, are taken from eternity itself at the risk of being condemned after all, since in this case at least the condemnation will be milder. In short, in the end everything boils down to never letting the thought arise that one is condemned but

to test again and again by one's behavior whether one is not, after all, a chosen one, to live always as if one really is, and in the end also to believe that one is, after the responsible condition has at least shown the possibility of it. This alone is worthy of our position towards God, whose grace we would despise if we did not know whether it would accept us. God's will, which is promised to all, must also be regarded by all as specifically valid. Like faith in general, this special confidence in his election is subject to the law of duty. You have to let yourself be determined by the promising will of God, thus you have to believe in the divine grace also for you, that is, you have to forget that the grace can also only be a *fucata* [disguised].⁷⁵⁴⁾ The basic idea is always that the strong decision of the will itself, the own inner self-deed, the courageous self-indication, because it is only possible through the salutary grace,⁷⁵⁵⁾ is the surest sign of the same and thus is to be put into action above all. So the old teachers, loyal to the system. Newer ones, like Schaff, on the other hand, although holding to the thesis, which alone creates this need, know to appease the inner doubt as to whether one is really a born-again, only to answer simply from the Lutheran point of view, thus dropping the dogma of reprobation. Yes, even the *Conf. Helv.*, c. 10,⁷⁵⁶⁾ knows as a last resort against the *periculosa tentatio praedestinationis* only to refer to the sacraments, which are to give the subject the desirable confidence; whereby it is thus completely disregarded that the sacraments can only do this insofar as they are celebrated in faith, i.e., with a mood of soul about whose existence the subject is just uncertain." Hereby Schneckenburger correctly states that through the Reformed *gratia particularis* and through the separation of grace from the means of grace given with it, man is pointed to himself, his subjective nature and his own works, in the question of God's grace.

754) That is, God cannot present the gospel to you for the attainment of salvation, but for the attainment of a "heavier damnation." Calvin, *Inst.* III, 24, 8.

755) But the "saving grace" is only effective through the means of grace. With the assumption of an immediate effectiveness, however, there is not grace effectiveness, but a product of one's own ego.

756) The second Helvetic Confession, *Confessio Helvetica posterior*, is meant. In Niemeyer, p. 481 ff.

How within the Lutheran Church a transition to Reformed territory took place, Schneckenburger depicts thus: "As the Reformed doctrine in *praxi* is always pushed towards the Lutheran side, so in *thesi* the Lutherans, as soon as they have left the old-church way of looking at things, ... immediately fall at home. immediately fall prey to the abstract consequence of the Reformed doctrine, as at present the latter mode of conception is the dominant one in the newer theology."⁷⁵⁷⁾ A little later⁷⁵⁸⁾ Schneckenburger says: "The question of the individual assurance of the sonship with God and of salvation, which is inherently close to the Reformed, could not arise at all to the Lutheran in the flourishing period of church orthodoxy. In penitent faith he took from absolution, which for him was immediate truth and bearer of comfort from the Holy Spirit, the confidence of forgiveness, and where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation. Only Pietism brought about the reflection on one's own individual subject here as well. The free subjectivity was detached from the objective church actions that no longer gave full satisfaction. Thus, gradually, even among the orthodox, an approach to the Reformed way of looking at things is beginning to show itself." To these words of Schneckenburger some remarks should be added. The question of the "individual assurance of sonship with God" naturally comes to the orthodox Lutheran as well, and daily, because he agrees with David (Ps. 143:2) and with Paul (Rom. 7:18) concerning his own damnability. But as long as he remains "orthodox," he looks, as God would have every poor sinner to do, into God's grace-anthem in Christ, which shines out to him from the Word of God and the sacraments, as the divine means of forgiveness of sins. Also, for the "orthodox" Lutheran, absolution is only one form of the promise of grace among several. In the Smalcald Articles it says: "The gospel does not give counsel and help against sin in one way (*non uno modo*); for God is abundantly rich in his grace. Firstly, through the oral word, in which forgiveness of sin is preached in all the world, which [the forgiveness of sin] is the actual ministry of the gospel. Secondly, through Baptism. Thirdly, through the holy Sacrament of the

757) op. cit., p. 264.

758) op. cit., p. 282.

Altar. Fourth, by the power of the keys and also per mutuuum colloquium et consolationem fratrum, Matt. 18: „Ubi duo fuerint congregati' etc" ⁷⁵⁹⁾ The "orthodox" Lutheran knows, as Luther puts it in the Large Catechism, "Everything in Christendom is ordered to the daily obtaining of forgiveness of sins by word and sign [the sacraments], to comfort and raise our consciences as long as we live here." ⁷⁶⁰⁾ The reflection on one's own individual "subject" in the question of the forgiveness of sins is therefore rightly considered unnecessary by the "orthodox" Lutheran, because he knows that the forgiveness of sins is completely independent of one's own subjective condition. The adequate "subject" for the forgiveness of sins or justification is in any case "the ungodly" (ασεβής).⁷⁶¹⁾ As to "pietism," it has been rightly remarked that the expression has not always been used in the same sense.⁷⁶²⁾ We understand by it, with Schneckenburger, the pathological phenomenon that emerged within the Lutheran Church at the end of the 17th century and in the first half of the 18th century. The essence of this pietism was that it gave instruction to base the state of grace before God on inner processes in the human heart, repentance, "faith," inner transformation, etc., instead of on the grace that Christ had acquired and offered in the objective means of grace. In this Schneckenburger rightly sees a crossing over into Reformed territory. A part of the Pietists obviously meant well. They wanted to oppose an "inward", "living" Christianity to the unfortunately torn down outward churchism, which makes an *opus operatum* out of dealing with the means of grace ordered by God. But they now unfortunately belonged to the class of reformers who do not understand the how of a true church reformation. Instead of confining themselves to the punishment of the abuse which the carnally secure make of the means of grace, they also touched the right use which poor sinners should make of the means of grace. Every poor sinner, who in the anguish of his heart asks for the grace of God, should be pointed directly to the Word of God and the sacraments, where God promises the forgiveness of sins acquired by Christ without any

759) M. 319, Art. IV.

761) Rom. 4:5.

760) M. 458, 55. [Trigl. 693, Art. III, 55 

762) RE.² XI, 672 ff.

subjective condition, that is, one that lies in man himself. In so far as Pietism did not refer poor sinners directly to the means of grace, but rather led them to reflect on their own condition, whether their repentance was deep enough and whether their faith was of the right kind, it actually denied perfect reconciliation through Christ (the *satisfactio vicaria*), it deprived justifying faith of its real object, and thus touched personal Christianity in its foundation and Christian piety in its innermost essence. The reflection on oneself, which befits the carnally secure and belongs to the sermon of the law, the pietists inculcated in the poor, frightened sinners to whom the gospel is to be preached. Thus, however, Pietism turned into Reformed and Roman waters.

Above all, however, it is obvious that all modern "experience theologians" who want to base faith not only on the word of Christ, but also on the historical appearance of Christ, the historical impressions of Christ, on the person of Christ as distinguished from the word of Christ, etc., have completely crossed over into Reformed territory. This crossing over is also found in the most positive representatives of "experiential theology". Only this is supposed to be "real faith in Christ, which is forced upon man by Christ's appearance Himself".⁷⁶³ It has been objected in favor of "experiential theology": Can one not also get the "impression" that there is a gracious God from the historical guidance and leadership both of the universal Church and of the lives of individual men? Against this objection it is necessary to remember a twofold point: 1. Admittedly, in the life of the Church and of individual men there are facts which make us recognize the strong and gracious hand of God. But as in the kingdom of nature, beside the signs of God's goodness, beside sunshine, growth and prosperity, peace and preservation, etc., there are also terrible signs of God's wrath, namely, thunder and lightning, earthquakes, floods of water, pestilence and dear times, wars and destruction: so also, historically speaking, we have this double phenomenon in the life of the Church and of individual men. We are confronted with the great number of false teachers and their overpowering followers, and the small number of Christians and their cross.

763) Ihmels, Zentralfragen, p. 89.

And these historical phenomena are also felt by Christians as phenomena of wrath and at times make such a "historical impression" on the children of God that they think that not Christ but the devil is in the governance, and not the pious but the godless are God's favorites. Read Psalm 73. There is only one thing that helps: we must take refuge with Assaph in the "sanctuary of God" and orient ourselves about the "historical phenomena" from God's Word alone. Without this orientation from God's Word alone, we are given over to doubt and despair. 2. Even if we have correctly oriented ourselves from God's Word about the historical phenomena in the life of the church and in our own lives, and realize that all things, even the phenomena of wrath, must serve for the best to those who love God, we must still hold fast to this on the basis of Scripture: The object of saving faith is this grace of God, that is, the forgiveness of sins which Christ purchased for us before 1900 years ago driving by his *satisfactio vicaria*, and which is offered and promised to us in Word and Sacrament. Whoever makes what God works by grace in the church and in the life of the individual the foundation of his faith in the gracious God falls away from Christ *eo ipso*. He bases grace with God on his repentance, his faith, his regeneration, his "implantation into Christ," his insertion "into the new humanity," "into the church," etc., rather than on Christ's perfect reconciliation of the world of sin. Luther does not exaggerate when he calls one who bases his faith in a gracious God on his "experiences," specifically also on his own faith, an "idolatrous, denied Christian," on the grounds that: "for he trusts and builds on what is his, namely, on a gift that God has given him, and not on God's Word alone [which promises God's grace for the sake of Christ's work], just as another builds and trusts on his strength, wealth, power, wisdom, holiness, which are nevertheless also gifts, given to him by God."⁷⁶⁴) Thus it is clear that Schneckenburger is right when he says that the newer theology does not stand on Lutheran but on Reformed ground, that is, it only knows a faith that reflects on itself and its subjective nature in the question of God's grace.

764) St. L. XVII, 2213.

Kirn also expressly makes the transformation of the life of mankind the object of reflective faith, because it (this transformation) is co-founding for the redemptive value of the work of Christ.⁷⁶⁵⁾ Other "experience theologians" prefer other expressions. They substitute for the Christian faith, which grasps the divine forgiveness of sins in the means of grace, the reflection on the implantation in the new humanity of Christ, on the membership in the kingdom of God and the activity in the same, etc.

The relationship between "experiential theology" and Reformed theology explains the strange judgments about Zwingli's and Calvin's theology that we find in "experiential theologians" such as Seeberg.⁷⁶⁶⁾ We would like to prevent the American Lutheran Church from being confused by these judgments. On the one hand, it is admitted that Zwingli's reformation is Eerasmian in origin, that Zwingli imperceptibly makes the gospel the new law, that Zwingli does not, like Luther, want to know God in Christ but means to know God before Christ, that Zwingli's Christianity becomes a kind of "philosophy" to be derived from the Bible. On the other hand, it is claimed that the essential agreement between Zwingli and Luther is obvious to everyone, that both have "a common understanding of the Gospel", that there is an "essential agreement" between Calvin's and Luther's "type of Protestantism". According to this, it would be immaterial for the conception of the gospel and of Christianity as a whole whether Christ redeemed all men or only a part of them, whether grace and the Spirit are given only through the means of grace ordered by God or without them and alongside them! This whimsical judgment is declared, as I said, from the kinship of "experiential theology" with Reformed theology. Both kinds of theology deny that the human world is reconciled to God through Christ's *satisfactio vicaria*. Reformed theology denies the extensive value, "experiential theology" denies the intensive value of the reconciliation that took place through Christ. Both types also deny that saving faith comes from the means of grace alone and has its object in these. Both, therefore, stand equally in the appropriation of salvation on Roman ground, that is, they agree that man, by reflection on his subjective quality, on his

765) [*Dogmatik*, p. 118.](#)

766) Seeberg, [*Dogmengesch.* II, 299 ff.](#)

experiences, his renewal and his godly life, etc., must come to the certainty of grace. In a purely factual discussion of the situation created by the assumption of an effect of grace apart from and besides the word of Christ, we really come back again and again to Luther's judgment that in practice Papists and enthusiasts are one thing.


By adhering to this judgment of Luther, however, we have no cause to exalt ourselves before God over any "enthusiast". Rather, we remind ourselves once again of the fact that the enthusiasm which we condemn in the enthusiasts is still in our flesh as a result of our innate *opinio legis*. Luther, too, confesses again and again that he has not yet learned the art of detaching himself from himself or "going out of himself" in the question of whether God is gracious to him, and of clinging only to the word of promise against all feeling and sensibility in his own inner being. The difference between Luther and the Lutheran Church on the one hand, and between Calvin, the Reformed Church and "experiential theology" on the other hand, remains that the latter condemn enthusiasm as false doctrine, the latter defend enthusiasm as right doctrine.

In the chapter of the means of grace also belongs the question of the separation of church and state, insofar as in the treatment of the means of grace the question arises whether also the state with its orders and means of power is to be used as a kind of auxiliary means of grace for the building of the church. Rome's position is well known. Both medieval and post-medieval Rome makes a double demand on the L.state. On the one hand, the state should have the duty to put itself at the service of the church with its power, that is, under certain circumstances with fire and sword; on the other hand, the state should have the duty to establish itself, namely in its legislation, according to the regulations of the church.⁷⁶⁷⁾ What position did the Church Reformation of the sixteenth century take on this question? Recent dogmatic history also points out a difference between the Reformed and Lutheran doctrines at this point. Whereas Luther establishes the principle that the state is to be governed not by the Word of God, but by human

767) Both demands are also sharply expressed in the papal circular of November 1, 1885 ("*Immortale Dei*"). See L.u.W. 1886, p. 12 ff.

reason⁷⁶⁸⁾ and that it therefore does not belong to the office of the authorities "to remove what anyone wants to teach and believe, whether it be the gospel or lies."⁷⁶⁹⁾ Zwingli very emphatically inculcates that the state must be governed by the Word of God, and that the authorities, if they are found to be negligent in this, "could be deposed with God's approval".⁷⁷⁰⁾ And while the Augsburg Confession limits the power of the authorities to the effect that they do not have to protect souls, "but rather body and goods by external force with the sword and bodily sounds,"⁷⁷¹⁾ , Calvin, on the other hand, probably with a sideways glance at the Augsburg Confession, points to the folly (*stultitia*) of the people, who limit the office of authority to the handling of law among men (*ius inter homines*) and to the settlement of disputes about earthly things (*terrenae controversiae*) and do not want to extend it to the pure worship of God.⁷⁷²⁾ Schneckenburger therefore judges: "The kinship of the Reformed piety with the Catholic one is generally also found in the fact that on both sides a theocracy over the state and worldly relationships in general is to be realized by men, the positive divine law is to be applied as the direct norm of all social relationships. ... Both forms of piety [the Catholic and the Reformed], with their active social trend, form a certain difference from the Lutheran."⁷⁷³⁾ Of course, the Lutheran Church also has an "active social direction" in that it very energetically directs Christians into social relationships with its ministries. Luther's dictum is well known: "Cursed be life that one lives for himself alone and not for his neighbor; and again, blessed be life that one lives not for himself but for his neighbor!"⁷⁷⁴⁾ The Lutheran Church relegates Christians with all their works all the more to the social life, as it teaches that works do not belong in the relationship before God, that is, are not necessary for the attainment and preservation of salvation. "See

768) St. L. X, 382 ff. 417. Cf. L. u. W.: "Are Political Pastors an Aberration?" 1896, p. 193 ff.

769) St. L. XVI, 50. 770) Opp. I, 369 ff. 524. 771) Art. 28; M., 63rd [Trigl. 85, 11 

772) *Inst. IV, 20, 9: Coarguitur eorum stultitia, qui vellent, (reges) neglecta Dei cura, iuri inter homines dicundo tantum intentos esse. Quasi vero Praefectos Deus suo nomine constituerit, qui terrenas controversias deciderent, quod vero longe gravioris niomenti erat, Praetermiserit, ut ipse pure coleretur ex legis suae Praescripto.* [Google]

773) Comparative account I, 161. 774) St. L. XI, 747.

thereon", says Luther, "that these works that you do should not be directed toward God, but toward your neighbor. He who is a ruler, a prince, a mayor, a judge, should not think that he is a ruler because of this, that he earns heaven with it or seeks his own therein, but that he thereby serves the community [the commonwealth]. And so henceforth with other works which I accept for the benefit of my neighbor." ⁷⁷⁵⁾ But the Lutheran Church, as long as it remains true to its principles, ⁷⁷⁶⁾ does not develop a social trend in the sense of theocracy, as if it demanded that the state include the Christian religion in its constitution and ensure its implementation. The Lutheran Church does not develop a social direction in the sense of theocracy. Rather, in the 28th article of the Augustana, the Lutheran Church warns against this mixing of church and state. The church "shall not lay down the law to secular power and set it by secular dealings," because the secular governance is not commanded to care for souls, but to protect "body and good against external power." To make religion a matter of state in the sense of theocracy corresponds to the Roman and Reformed, but contradicts the Lutheran doctrine. This is also how Schneckenburger understood it when he states at this point a difference between the Lutheran church on the one hand and the Roman and Reformed churches on the other. Zwingli's view of the relationship between church and state is described by Seeberg as follows: "The theocratic thought that guided Zwingli does not allow either the church or the state to have their way. On the one hand, the secular authorities exercise the church government, so that the Christian doctrine virtually becomes state law; ⁷⁷⁷⁾ on the other hand, these authorities are absolutely subject to the authority of Holy Scriptures; their laws and orders are valid only insofar as they are in accordance with Scripture. If the authorities act against Scripture, they are to be deposed. ⁷⁷⁸⁾ Only apparently is the subjection

775) [Op. cit. \[305\]](#).

776) About practical deviations from their principles later.

777) Second Disputation at Zurich, *Opp.* I, 524: "My lords shall not prescribe any law other than from the holy, unconfessed scripture of God. If they become sympathetic to it, and recognize otherwise, which I do not hope, then I will preach against them with the Word of God."

778) In the 42nd article, *Opp.* I, 369, says of the authorities: "If, however, they are unfaithful and deviate from the plumbline of Christ, they may be deposed with God's sanction". At the end of the section, Zwingli explains why it is that people do not unanimously reject tyrannical authorities. This is because piety and righteousness are not yet general enough. He says:

of the church under the state, because state laws are only valid if they correspond to the law of the church or the Bible. This is truly medieval thinking. The implementation of his work of reformation included both a new doctrinal order and a new order of life, which are enforced by the means of state power. Christianity is the business of the state, but the state is the organ of the church. Like Savonarola, Zwingli also wanted to reform his city according to the divine law of the Bible with the help of the secular authorities. ... In all areas, therefore, the medieval and humanistic barrier in Zwingli's teachings and work confronts us in such a way that it establishes the difference to Luther's thoughts." ⁷⁷⁹⁾ With respect to Calvin, Seeberg notes, ⁷⁸⁰⁾ that the same "ascribed to the state the task of enforcing church ideals in the service of God, even by secular means. ... The state has the duty to punish every rebellion against the recognized religion and to take care of the implementation of the commandments not only of the second but also of the first tablet. This is shown not only by Israelite history, but already by the pagan conception, which makes the *cura pietatis* the first task of the state."⁷⁸¹⁾ Of course, he may not change anything in the divine law. In reality, therefore, he will have to carry out only what the spiritual officials prescribe. From this point of view, the personal position that Calvin claimed in Geneva as well as the draconian severity of the legislation and justice that he directed can be understood. Since every sin is a rebellion against the divine majesty, it is also to be punished with the most severe civil punishments. Thus Calvin's reformation was carried out in the manner of theocracy. God is the Lord, whose service the church demands and which the state enforces. But since this position of state authority in relation to the church is ultimately connected with the church office endowed with divine authority, the connection

"Because we are so lukewarm in our love of common righteousness, we overlook all the wicked deeds of the tyrants and are deservedly rent by them and at last punished with them. So, then, it is not counsel or way of getting rid of the tyrants that is lacking, but general piety is lacking. Beware, you tyrants! The Gospel will train pious people. Become pious, too; then you will be bome up on hands. If, however, you do not do that, but rage and storm, you will be trodden under foot."

⁷⁷⁹⁾ Dogmengesch. II, 305. Cf. also Güder-R. Stähelin, RE.² XVII, 630.

⁷⁸⁰⁾ A. a. O. p. 400 f. ⁷⁸¹⁾ *Inst.* IV, 20, 3. 9.

of the Calvinist church ideal with medieval ideas is an even clearer one than with Zwingli. ... One understands from this view the proceedings against Servetus".⁷⁸²⁾ Schneckenburger sees in this Reformed mixture of state and church a valuable complement to Luther's Reformation. He thinks: The difference between Catholic and Reformed piety on the one hand and Lutheran piety on the other "goes so far that the question has been raised, not without reason, whether the Reformation could have been carried out and maintained in only Lutheran specificity against the more energetic, society-forming principle in Catholicism, if the specifically Reformed one had not stood by its side. How long one hesitated in Saxony, after the Gospel had been preached for many years, to make even the slightest change in the worship, until Carlstadt entered in a Reformed way, with which, however, as a heterogeneous element, he could not hold on for the long run. ... In Zurich, on the other hand," (under Zwingli) "a start was immediately made with the abolition of all unhealthy things, with a profound change in the worship, with the improvement of customs and the police".⁷⁸³⁾ But what Schneckenburger and others⁷⁸⁴⁾ see at this point as a valuable addition to Lutheran doctrine and piety by Reformed doctrine and piety is in fact a continuance in Roman doctrine and practice, and has the effect of transforming Christianity into a works righteousness dressed up in Christianity. Both the assumption of an immediate Spirit effect and the mixing of state and church drive the Reformed Church into works doctrine. By the assumption of the direct effect of the Spirit this happens because this direct effect of the Spirit does not exist at all and therefore man is dependent on his own effect, which he then mistakenly believes to be a product of the Holy Spirit. The addition of the means of state power to the building of the church results in works righteousness, because the means of state — even if applied very vigorously — never convey the grace of God

782) Michael Servetus was burned for heresy (anti-Trinitarian) in Geneva on October 27, 1553. Unfortunately, Melancthon also inexpensively approved of this procedure. Cf. Melancthon's letter to Calvin of October 14, 1554 in Corp. Ref. VIII, 362 sq.

783) Comparative presentation I, 161 f.

784) Schneckenburger also refers to Ranke, *Reformationsgesch.* III, 89. cf. against Ranke L. u. W. 1868, p. 119 f.

in Christ, faith and the Holy Spirit, but at best bring about an external piety that remains in the realm of law and external works. Luther writes:⁷⁸⁵⁾ "It is futile and impossible to command or force someone by power to believe this way or that. It takes another grip; power does not do it. ... It is a free work around faith, to which one can force nobody. Yes, it is a divine work in the spirit, let alone that external power should force and create it. ... The blind, wretched people do not see how futile and impossible a thing they undertake. For no matter how hard they command and how much they rage, they cannot force people any further than to follow them with their mouths and hands; they cannot force their hearts if they tear themselves apart. ... Thus the weak consciences are driven by power to lie, to deny, and to say otherwise than they hold it in their hearts, and thus burden themselves with abominable foreign sins." ¶ It should be added that, in spite of Luther's warnings and in spite of the clear exposition in the 28th article of the Augustana, the mixing of state and church has unfortunately penetrated into the Lutheran Church as well. But this fact is not to be regarded as a supplement or improvement of Lutheran doctrine and position, but is to be estimated as an aberration into Reformed-Roman territory, which is also accompanied by the same harmful consequences, provided the wrong principle prevails.⁷⁸⁶⁾ It

785) [St. L. X, 397 f.](#)

786) The historical investigation is subject to the question whether Luther did not also disregard the correct principle issued by him in individual cases. Such a thing can also occur with great people. Peter acted in a certain case even after Pentecost against the principle he taught correctly, Gal. 2:11 ff. On Luther's sharp fundamental divorce between church and state on the one hand and his accommodation to the present confused relationships on the other, cf. [Walther, Pastorate, p. 368 ff.](#) [translated by Tappert in his [Lutheran Confessional Theology in America 1840-1880, pgs 287-290](#)]; Köstlin, [Luthers Theologie 2, II, 274 ff.](#) [Internet Archive [here](#); English ed. Ggl Bks [here](#)] In the St. Louis edition of Luther's works, the historical introduction to the writings "Wider die Juden" is critical of Luther's 1543 writing, "Von den Juden und ihren Lügen," insofar as here Luther counsels the use of secular power on the part of the state after the Jews had abused his earlier protectorate. (Cf. [XX, Introduction, p. 63, note 1.](#)) Luther makes it the duty of the regents to "force the Jews to work, forbid usury, and control their blaspheming and cursing," [XX, 1997](#). But here again Luther's refrain returns: "Whether they do not believe as we do, we cannot help it, and no one can be forced to believe," and the admonition to the pastors: "Not that they should curse them much

is of no help: If we want to keep the Christian doctrine, namely the doctrine that we are saved and justified by God's grace through faith without the works of the law, we must on the one hand hold on to the means of grace ordered by God, and on the other hand be satisfied with these means and renounce the addition of the means of power of the state for the building of the church. We must return to this subject, the separation of church and state, in the doctrine of the church.

Luther's doctrine of the means of grace in its relationship to the medieval and Reformed doctrines of the means of grace. ^

One has also wanted to find medieval kinship in Luther's doctrine of the means of grace. We already recalled Adolf Harnack's judgment. "By singling out certain actions as 'means of grace,' he [Luther] stepped back into the abandoned narrow circles of the Middle Ages."⁷⁸⁷ On the other hand, the real fact is this, that any relationship between Luther's and the medieval doctrine of the means of grace is a thing of impossibility, and this because Luther and the medieval theologians have completely opposite concepts of saving grace. According to medieval doctrines, saving grace is a good quality instilled in man, *gratia infusa*, and the means of grace have the purpose of instilling in man so much "grace" that by cooperating with this "grace" *de congruo* and also *de condigno*, man can earn forgiveness of sins and salvation. According to Luther's doctrine, saving grace is not something that attaches to or is in the man, but God's gracious disposition for Christ's sake, *favor Dei propter Christ*, or the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, and the means of grace have the purpose of offering the forgiveness of sins that is available through Christ, and by this presentation to work faith and, if it is already worked, to strengthen it. Luther was also very clearly aware of this contrast. In contrast to the scholastic conception of "grace," he writes against Latomus: "God's grace is an

or do them harm personally", 1997. 1996 Cf. XX, 1826 Luther's letter of December 10, 1537, to "Josel, Juden zu Roßheim, warum er ihm *schriftliche Fürbitte versagen*". The letter begins, "To the prudent Josel, Jew of Roßheim, my good friend."

787) Grundriß der Dogmengesch., p. 431.

external good, God's gracious disposition, the opposite of God's wrath. ... I take grace in the proper sense for God's gracious disposition, as befits it, not for a condition of the [human] spirit, as our moderns the scholastics have taught."⁷⁸⁸ Melancthon, too, had early grasped the opposition to the medieval concept of grace. He expresses this when he says in the first edition of his *Loci*: "We rightly bring suit against the scholastics who have so shamefully misused the sacred word 'grace' by taking it for a quality in the spirit of the saints, most grossly of all the Thomists. ... Away with the Aristotelian delusion of qualities [in the soul of man]! ... The word grace does not denote a quality in us, but rather God's will itself or God's benevolence (*benevolentiam*) toward us."⁷⁸⁹ In the Mass Luther was aware of the opposition to the medieval concept of grace that he repeated in one form or another the dictum: "From this doctrine consists the whole Papacy: grace is poured into man by a secret effect."⁷⁹⁰ In the difference of the concept of grace is then founded the further difference that according to medieval doctrine the sacraments *ex opere operato* communicate grace, while Luther calls this an ungodly opinion and in every case demands faith on the part of man for the salutary use of the sacraments. "For if the sacrament gives me grace because I receive it, in truth I obtain grace from my work and not from faith. ... You see clearly how the sacraments have not been understood at all by the writers of the Sentences, because they did not care at all about faith and the promise of the sacraments. ... Therefore, as I have said, they have not only taken the sacraments in fetters (*captivaverunt*), but

788) Opp. v. a. V, 489: *Gratia Dei est externum bonum, favor Dei, opposita irae [Dei]. ... Gratiam accipio hic proprie pro favore Dei, sicut debet, non pro qualitate animi, ut nostri Recentiores docuerunt.* [Google] In the Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, "Grace properly means God's favor or favor which He bears to us with Himself." (St. L. XIV, 98.) Cf. the detailed treatise on the concept of grace II, 12 ff.

789) *Loci*, ed. Kolde 1890, p. 168 sq. Cf. Kolde on the concept of grace in Thomas, p. 168, note 1. Thomas teaches of grace: "It is poured into man, and because of it he is a *homo gratus* with God, is loved by God."


790) St. L. XIII, 917.

completely, as much as has been in them, abolished them (*aboleverunt*)."⁷⁹¹ Therefore, it really stands that between Luther's and the medieval doctrine of the means of grace no relationship is possible, but here the sharpest contrast prevails. Correct is Seeberg: Through Luther "fell the medieval semipelagianism, the doctrine of grace, the whole doctrine of sacraments, hierarchism, and its doctrine of works and merit. But likewise the fanatic ideas of an unmediated spiritual effect fell under the force of the Reformatoral basic thought".⁷⁹²

Seeberg's latter remark leads to the question, also raised, whether there is a relationship between Luther's and the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace. Here, too, one has wanted to state not only similarities, but even complete agreement. Thus Böhl.⁷⁹³ One thinks to be able to find a proof for the

791) Opp. v. u. V, 64 sq.: [St. L. XIX, 62 ff.](#) Rightly, Luther does not make any distinction among the scholastics on this point. Luther occasionally praises the scholastics as "good heads". But they "fantasized" and taught "monstrosities" because they did not know the case of Adam and did not know that the law was spiritual. So they had no right understanding of the gospel, grace and faith. By saving grace they understood a quality in the heart to which man contributes. Cf. [IV, 1836, 633; XVIII, 840; XXII, 1402; V, 574](#). Well compiled material on medieval theology and especially on the doctrine of the sacraments is found in [Schmid-Hauck, Dogmengesch., p. 275 ff.](#)

792) [Dogmengesch. II, 284](#).

793) [Dogmatik, p. 440 f.](#) See also Macpherson, ([Christian Dogmatics, p. 4224 sq.](#)). Among newer Reformed Christians, there is often the assertion that the Reformed Church differs in the doctrine of the means of grace with the later Lutheran theologians, but not with Luther. Böhl says: "On the one side stands the Lutheran Church, which in the later dogmatic development assumed a *vis conversiva et regenatrix Scripturae inhaerens*. ... This was quite different from Luther's saying that everything that is taken for spirit without a word is purely diabolical. Here he was quite in the right, and in this the Reformed Church also followed him." Böhl attributes a deviation from Luther to the later Lutheran theologians, "especially since the dispute with Rathmann." But he adds somewhat cautiously, "Although already the Formula of Concord 601, 55 [[Trigl. 903, Sol. Decl., II, 55](#) ] makes an approach to tying the Holy Spirit to the Bible letter." When Lutheran theologians, in combating Rathmann, used the expression that God's Word also had divine power *extra usum*, the expression was opposed to the enthusiastic error according to which the Word of Scripture should gain life-giving power only through faithful use (which amounts to immediate illumination). But the expression belongs to those which do not recommend themselves to the general acceptance, because they, in order to be understood, still require closer explanations.

agreement in Luther's statements, where Luther distinguishes between the "outer word" and the effect of the Holy Spirit "inwardly in the heart". This distinction, however, is familiar to Luther throughout. But Luther rejects as clearly and decisively as possible any detachment of the Spirit's work from the "outward word" and teaches that the Holy Spirit does not direct his work "inwardly in the heart" in any other way than through the outward word. Luther says in his writing "Wider die himmlischen Propheten" (Against the Heavenly Prophets): "If God has sent forth his holy gospel, he acts with us in two ways: once outwardly, the other time inwardly. Outwardly he deals with us through the oral word of the Gospel and through the bodily signs, such as baptism and sacrament. Inwardly, he deals with us through the Holy Spirit and faith, along with other gifts. But all this in measure and order, that the outward matters should and must come first, and the inward matters afterwards, and by the outward matters; so that he hath determined to give no man the inward matters without the outward matters; for he will give no man the Spirit, nor faith without the outward word and sign."⁷⁹⁴ Concerning Ex. 15:16 Luther remarks: "God has said: When the word of Christ is preached, then I am in your mouth, and I go with the word through your ears into the heart";⁷⁹⁵ and concerning Joh. 6:63: "God has ordained His Holy Spirit to come ordinarily through the word. Christ himself speaks such things in this place. ... He will not suffer thee to flutter now and then, to seek a spirit, and to dream that one may speak: I have it by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. ... Christ does not want to have such an intercession, he binds only to the word; he does not want to have the spirit separated from his word. Therefore, if you hear anyone boast that he has something from inspiration or inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and it is without the Word of God, whatever it may be, say that it is the wretched devil."⁷⁹⁶ Luther expresses himself even more crudely in the following words: "Do you see there the devil, the enemy of divine order? How he opens your mouth with the words 'spirit, spirit, spirit', and yet, at the same time, he outlines both bridges, footbridge and path, ladder and everything, through which the spirit is to come to you, namely through the outward orders of

794) St. L. XX, 202

795) III, 925

796) VII, 2389, 2388

God in bodily baptism, signs and oral Word of God, and will teach you, not how the Spirit should come to you, but how you should come to the Spirit, that you should learn to ride on the clouds and ride on the wind."⁷⁹⁷ Seeberg says of Luther's doctrine of the Word and the action of the Holy Spirit: "Luther distinguishes the purely human action of the Word from the action of the Spirit 'in', 'with and through', 'with and under', but in such a way that the latter takes place only by virtue of the former."⁷⁹⁸ In short, the factual situation is this: As certainly as Zwingli and Calvin and more recent Reformers such as Böhl, Hodge and Shedd (*Efficacious grace acts immediately*) teach an immediate effect of the Spirit, and Luther, on the other hand, rejects any immediate effect of the Spirit as self-deception and a devil's bargain, so certainly can we state not a correspondence but only a complete contrast between Luther's and the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace.⁷⁹⁹ But connected with this difference is another one,

797) [XX, 203](#). 798) [op. cit. II, 267](#).

799) We add a statement by Luther in which he shows the causal relationship between the "outward word" and "faith in the heart". Luther says to the words Joh. 17:20 ("But I do not pray for them alone, but also for those who will believe in me through their word"): "Christ lifts up and praises the apostles' sermon, so that through it we must come to Him (Christ) and believe. Against this there is now a devil's scourge running through his fanatical spirits, who despise the outward word and pretend that the Spirit must do it all alone; outward things, signs and oral doctrines are of no use for faith in the heart; the inward man must have an inward word. To the same lying spirits write only this text: Ask them whether the word "believe" belongs to the inner or outer man, or whether the apostles preached the outer or the inner word. So they cannot deny that this word 'believe', which is only of the heart and inward man, and 'by their word' belong together and make an inward man. Faith is the most intimate reason of the heart. Since then Christ says that they should believe, that is, become inward or spiritual men by the apostle's word, it follows irrefutably that such a word does not serve the outward but the inward man, and it is ever nothing that they slander that oral word or sermon is nothing useful without an outward testimony or confession of the inward man. But if they say: If the outward word could do this, all who hear it would be faithful and saved. Answer: They must give thanks. For this is already half known, that they cannot deny that nevertheless some believe. For so we also say, Though all believe not, yet are they many that believe. Neither saith Christ, that they shall all believe. What then is it that they want to follow

the difference regarding the concept of grace. The Reformed often correctly define saving grace as God's grace, God's gracious disposition, etc. However, when asked to whom this gracious disposition of God applies, they come up with a "but". The gracious disposition and the spiritual effect flowing from it are to apply only to those who are directly enlightened or born again. Thus the older and newer Reformed doctrines. Böhl, too, carefully inculcates: "Only to these made alive by the Holy Spirit do those assurances of Jesus apply, that the Word cleanses them." ⁸⁰⁰⁾ Thus, on the part of the Reformed, we have the *consensus* with Rome that the forgiveness of sins is indeed granted only to those who have an "infused grace" to show in themselves. On the other hand, the objection that the Papists allow grace to be infused with human cooperation, while the Reformed allow it to be infused without any human cooperation, directly, does not apply. Since the immediate effect of the Spirit exists only in the imagination, the Reformed, too, are in fact dependent only on their own activity. Therefore Luther's judgment is correct in its entire scope, that the enthusiasts, because they teach an immediate effect of the Spirit, fall into Roman works doctrine and "lose Christ, the cornerstone," because they do not want to come to God by faith in the forgiveness of sins acquired from Christ and offered in the means of grace, but by an infused or indwelling grace. Hence the further contrast between Luther and the Reformed in practice. While the Reformed warn against hanging on to the external means of grace and are always afraid that people might confuse the means of grace and the persons who administer the means of grace

and conclude: They do not all believe, therefore faith does not come through the word? So I also wanted to infer and to make believe: They are not all obedient rulers, overlords or parents, therefore no authority, rulers nor parents would be useful or necessary and God's commandment would be in vain. Therefore we turn it back and say thus: We know that some believe who hear the word, and can prove it by many sayings and examples of Scripture, therefore we conclude that the word is useful and necessary, not to the ears alone, but also to the heart or inner man. But the fact that some do not believe, even though they hear the word, does not take anything away from the word, but nevertheless remains true that it is the means by which faith comes into the heart, and without it no one can believe". (St. L. VIII, 829 f.)

800) Dogmatics, p. 445 f.

with God Himself,⁸⁰¹⁾ Luther cannot do enough on the one hand with the instruction that in the means of grace and in the persons who administer the means of grace God Himself deals with us, and on the other hand with the warning that we do not think differently of God than we hear and see in the means of grace.⁸⁰²⁾ This is the point at which every Christian can and should examine himself whether he has the Christian doctrine of the means of grace and lives in it. It stands like this: We foolishly live in remoteness from God instead of in closeness to God graciously granted to us, if it is not thus said in our hearts: God speaks to me in His Word which goes from mouth to mouth among men, and which I hear from the mouth of men; God speaks to me in His Word which I read; Christ Himself absolves in the Word which He has besouled men; Christ Himself baptizes; Christ Himself forgives sin only by the presentation of His body and blood in the Lord's Supper. This is Luther's "way of faith resting directly on Word and sacrament," as E. F. Karl Müller has expressed it,⁸⁰³⁾ and in which this Reformed theologian recognizes a difference that separates Luther from Calvinism. The same is to be said of the entire Lutheran Church, insofar as it holds fast to the doctrine of the means of grace taught by Luther and the Lutheran Confession. Only in extreme necessity do Lutherans and Reformed come to a practical agreement regarding the means of grace doctrine. Because in the distress of conscience and death the *gratia particularis* and the immediate effect of the Spirit fail, in this case the Reformed themselves point to the general promises of God and thus to the objective means of grace. Thus, in this case, unification comes about by practice driving the Reformed to the Lutheran position, as Schneckenburger has expressed it.⁸⁰⁴⁾ Luther has been suspected of the harsh language he uses against the "enthusiasts." Luther himself is aware of this harsh language, and he therefore in a way asks for apology by explaining,⁸⁰⁵⁾ that he does not mean both human persons and the

801) Cf. E.g. *Consensus Tigurinus* XI, XII, XIII, XV: Niemeyer, p. 194. In addition Calvin's *Expositio*, p. 208. Here is no factual difference between them and Carlstadt, who also claimed: "This is a mean and abominable pity that our Christians seek forgiveness of sins in the sacrament." Cf. Carlstadt's writing "Von dem widerchristlichen Mißbrauch," etc. [St. L. XX, 94](#).

802) [St. L. XIII, 2458 ff.](#)

803) RE. ³ XV, 599.

804) [Comparative account I, 261 f.](#) 805) [St. L. XX, 204 f. 201 f.](#)

arch-enemy of the Christian church, the devil, who by pretending to an immediate spiritual effect wants to pull Christians down from the rock of the objective word of God and thus actually deprive them of the gospel that had been brought back to light by the Reformation. Every man deceives himself with regard to his personal fellowship with God, unless he bases his state of grace with God on the forgiveness of sins promised in the external Word of God.

The means of grace in the form of absolution. ^

We still treat absolution under a special section, because this doctrine belongs to the doctrines at which Christian knowledge makes an examination. Under general addresses about "gospel" and "reconciliation through Christ" many ambiguities were and are hidden. These ambiguities are revealed by the objections raised against absolution.

That the gospel in all forms of testimony promises the forgiveness of sins acquired from Christ, that is, absolution, has already had to be explained repeatedly. Luther and the Lutheran Church in its confession use the term absolution to describe another special form of the proclamation of the gospel. This is the form according to which forgiveness of sins is pronounced to one or more persons from their confession of sins by a public minister of the church or also by any Christian. The Smalcald Articles, under the overall title "Gospel," besides the preached word and besides baptism and the Lord's Supper, also mention absolution as a way of "help against sin."⁸⁰⁶ Further, it says there under the chapter "Von der Confession" that "confession or absolution" should not be abandoned in the church, with the reasoning: "because absolution or the power of the key is also a help and comfort against sin and evil consciences, instituted in the Gospel by Christ" (*instituta*).⁸⁰⁷ In an expert opinion Luther, Melancthon and Bugenhagen say: "One must also leave room for the comforting free gospel, so that it can be said to a single man as well as to many. But what is absolution but the gospel, told to a single man, who thereby receives consolation for his known sin? So Christ's

806) p. 319. 807) p. 321.

example is Matt. 9, where he absolves the gout-ridden man individually, and Luke 7 also absolves Mary Magdalene individually, and more."⁸⁰⁸⁾

This absolution was and is annoying to many. Zwingli's campaign against Luther was also directed in particular against the absolution, which Luther had taught and held in very high esteem.⁸⁰⁹⁾ Zwingli's rejection of absolution is easily understood from his *πρώτον ψευδός*. Because Zwingli claimed of the Spirit in general that he had no need of a chariot, he believed he should still more particularly scoff at the fact that Luther saw even in absolution spoken by men a consolation for consciences. Zwingli writes: "From the Spirit comes the assurance of our spirit that we are sons of God, not from saying armpit-four."⁸¹⁰⁾ Zwingli mockingly uses "Armpit-four" for "absolvers." This contradiction and derision has been evident through the centuries down to our own time. Also within the Lutheran Church one has wanted to dismiss with the abuse also the right use of confession and absolution. Here belongs the dictum of the farthest left pietists:⁸¹¹⁾ "Confessional, Satan's chair, hell's den."⁸¹²⁾ Here in America, not only representatives of Reformed church fellowships but also American Lutherans talked of "Roman leaven" when the fathers of our Synod taught and practiced confession and absolution.⁸¹³⁾ The old Norwegian Synod also had to present the Christian doctrine of absolution in the dispute it got into with the Augustana Synod over objective reconciliation or justification.⁸¹⁴⁾

808) Ratschlag auf die Handlung zu Smalcald 1531. [St. L. XVI, 1795](#).

809) [St. L. XVII, 2021](#): "For the sake of this matters [absolution] I need the confession most of all and do not want to and cannot do without it, because it often and still daily gives me great consolation when I am sad and distressed.

810) Zwingli's answer, that these words: "This is my corpse" etc.. [St. L. XX, 1131 f.](#)

811) Kaspar Schade, Th. Großgebauer etc.

812) H. Schmid, [Gesch. des Pietismus, p. 259 ff.](#)

813) [Der Lutheraner 1850, p. 113 ff.](#)

814) [Lehre und Wehre 1872, p. 161 ff.](#): "A document concerning the doctrinal dispute among the Scandinavian Lutherans about absolution." [Der Lutheraner 1850, p. 113 ff.](#): "How great and pernicious is the error of those who deny the power of the pastors of the gospel to forgive sins on earth." [Tenth Synodal Report of the General Synod, 1860](#), pp. 34 ff.: Proceedings on the Doctrine of Absolution. The theses are by Pastor Brohm. It is clear from the proceedings that consensus on the biblical doctrine was reached only through detailed negotiations. In [L. u. W. 1874, pp. 138 ff.](#),

Luther, the Lutheran Confession and also later theologians have stringently proven from John 20:23 that Absolution is a scriptural way or form of proclaiming the gospel. In the words, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them," three things are clearly expressed: 1. That men who have received the Holy Spirit, that is, Christians, are to remit or absolve sins; 2. That this remission or absolution of sins refers also to certain persons (individuals), ἄν τινῶν ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας, if ye remit the sins of any; 3. That with this absolution spoken by men the matter is settled before God, ἀφίενται αὐτοῖς, they are remitted.⁸¹⁵ In order to avoid the meaning of Scripture, Zwingli allowed himself here also, as in the doctrine of the person of Christ, an alloecsis, an interchange (*permutatio*) of the concept of the subject. In the words of Scripture, the disciples, i.e., men, are mentioned as the persons who forgive sins: "Whom ye remit sins." Zwingli, however, maintains that the Holy Spirit must be substituted for the disciples. When Christ ascribes to the disciples what is nevertheless the work of the Holy Spirit alone, this is done "out of divine friendship." He writes: "Although Christ ascribes the binding and unbinding to the disciples, it is of the working Spirit alone. They preached, however, that the Spirit before" (that is, before, without word, directly) "had also made alive in them and"⁸¹⁶

Prof. F. A. Schmidt (then in St. Louis) takes the doctrine of absolution and defends the doctrines of the Norwegian Synod as Scriptural and confessional against the attacks of the Swedes and the Iowans. Testimonies of the old Norwegian Synod concerning justification and absolution: tract no. 4: "Om Retfærdiggjørelsen." Decorah, Iowans, 1872. — V. Koren, "Samlede Skrifter." III, pp. 45-74. Decorah, Iowans. 1911.[English translation by DeGarmeaux [here](#).] — H. A. Preus, "Wisconsinisme." pp. 65-96. Decorah, Iowans, 1875. — E. Hove, "Retfærdiggjørelsen." Synodalberetning 1901. decorah. — "Festskrift." 1903. pp. 250-258 (J. B. Frich). Decorah.

815) Perhaps the reading ἀφέωνται (perfect tense) is preferable. But even if we read ἀφίενται (present tense), the translation "dem sind sie erlassen" is in place, because according to the context the present tense ἀφίενται denotes simultaneity with the εἰν ἀφῆτε, about the perfect tense ἀφέωνται [Winer 6, p. 74](#).

816) What the Spirit had made alive in the disciples "before", He had also made alive in them by the Word, as Christ expressly declares Joh. 17:8: "The words which thou gavest me I have given them, and they have received and known truly" (*scil.* by faith in the Word) "that I came forth from thee."

makes it alive at all times where he wills; therefore out of divine friendship the apostles' names are added, which is of the Spirit alone."

⁸¹⁷⁾ Thus not only Zwingli. In the Reformed camp the rejection of absolution is quite general.⁸¹⁸⁾ It is a self-evident consequence of the *gratia particularis* and the *immediata Spiritus Sancti operatio*. For if divine grace is particular, absolution would affect only the elect, and if the Holy Spirit acts immediately, the forgiveness of sins would not be in the Word of the Gospel at all, and thus could not be communicated by the preachers of the Word. But even in the Lutheran Church, the explicit denial of absolution, and the factual denial of it, have penetrated primarily for two reasons:⁸¹⁹⁾ first, because of a lack of understanding of the Gospel of God in general, as among the Pietists, and second, as a necessary concomitant of synergism. Like Calvinism, synergism makes the forgiveness of sins conditional on something good in man. In Calvinism this is aliquid in homine, what the Spirit has directly wrought beforehand or incidentally; in Synergism it is the *facultas se applicandi ad gratiam*, right conduct, "personal self-determination," etc. In both cases, neither the absolver nor the absolved knows whether the absolution "hits." However, what is annoying to a large church audience in general and in particular about absolution comes out in the main objections to it.

In general, it was and is objected that the practice of absolution with preceding confession of sin is lingering "Roman leaven".⁸²⁰⁾ This objection is based on ignorance of both the Roman and Christian doctrines of Absolution. According to Roman doctrine, absolution is an act a) which can be performed only by a Roman ordained priest, in

817) Zwingli's writing: "Daß diese Worte" etc.. [St. L. XX, 1132](#).

818) Heppe, [Dogmatik der ev.-ref. K., p. 486. 502](#). Cf. G. Plitt, *Grundriß der Symbolik* 3, p. 131 ff.

819) Cf. Caspari, RE. ³ II, 538 f.

820) [L. u. W. 1874, p. 140](#) f. The Norwegian Synod was accused of "theoretical Catholicism" and "practical Catholicism" because of its doctrine of absolution, because it represented a doctrine "which aims at the erection of the cornerstone in the papacy, the sacrament of office," "an anti-Christian trend which, supported by a papist principle, works to dissolve Christianity into universalism and hierarchy.

more serious cases by the bishop, and in the most serious cases by the pope,⁸²¹⁾ b) which is conditioned by three human works: repentance⁸²²⁾ a full confession⁸²³⁾ and the performance of an imposed satisfaction,⁸²⁴⁾ c) whereby the absolver as judge judges whether the required performances are sufficiently present or not, and then grants or refuses absolution.⁸²⁵⁾ The Christian doctrine of absolution has nothing in common with this Roman abomination⁸²⁶⁾. According to Scripture, the power of absolution or the power of the keys (*potestas clavium*) does not belong to one person or to some persons in the Church, but to all persons who have received the Holy Spirit, that is, to all Christians without exception. This is clearly taught in not only John 20:23 and Matt. 18:18, but also Matt. 16:19.⁸²⁷⁾ According to this

821) Trident, *Sess. XIV*, c. 4. 6. 7, *can.* 10. 11.

822) Trident, *Sess. XIV*, c. 4, *can.* 5.

823) Trident, *Sess. XIV*, c. 5, *can.* 6-8.

824) Trident, *Sess. XIV*, c. 8, *can.* 13. 14.

825) Trident, *Sess. XIV*, c. 5. 6. 8, *can.* 9.


826) The most powerful description of this abomination, by which Christ's perfect satisfaction is denied and grace made uncertain, we have from Luther in the Smalcald Articles under the section "On the False Repentance of the Papists". M., pp. 313 ff. [[Trigl. 481](#), [Smalc. art.](#), [Part III, art. III, 10 ff.](#) [🔗](#)] Cf. [Der Lutheraner 1850, p. 116](#) f. Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore also records the Roman abomination in its entirety in [The Faith of Our Fathers. 26, p. 385](#) sqq.

827) All restrictions of the words Joh. 20:23: "Whose sins you remit" to the persons of the apostles or to the persons of the apostles and the "New Testament ministers" are carried into the text. Only Luther's version is in accordance with the text: "This power is given here to all Christians, although some have appropriated it to themselves alone, as the pope, the bishops, priests and monks; they say publicly and impudently that this power is given to them and not also to the laity. But Christ says here neither of priests nor of monks, but says: 'Receive ye the Holy Spirit.' To him who has the Holy Spirit, power is given, that is, to him who is a Christian. But who is a Christian? He who believes. He who believes has the Holy Spirit. Therefore every Christian has the power ... to retain or remit sins. ([XI, 745 f.](#) Also [XIX, 845 f.](#) and often.) The right thing has Adolf Späth in [Annotations on the Gospel according to St. John \[p. 313-314\]](#): "On whom is this power here conferred? Is it on a special class or order of men, the clergy, as Rome and all Romanizers teach? But when this power was conveyed by the Lord, the apostles were not all present; nor were those present on this occasion all apostles. John clearly distinguishes between the Twelve (v. 24) and the disciples (v. 19). And Luke tells us distinctly that others were gathered with the disciples (Luke 24:33) on that evening. Luther, therefore, is right in saying: This power is given to all Christians. Whosoever hath the Holy Spirit, to him

every Christian, indeed every child, can absolve just as validly and effectively as a pastor, bishop, archbishop, and so on.⁸²⁸⁾ And as for the conditions of absolution, the matter stands thus: Absolution is based neither on self-made contrition nor on true contrition wrought by the Holy Spirit through the law, neither on confession of all sins before men nor on any human satisfaction. Absolution is based only on the fact of the world's reconciliation through the perfect satisfaction of Christ and on the divine command,⁸²⁹⁾ to proclaim in Christ's name the remission of sins that exists through Christ. And what is thus proclaimed for Christ's sake, wholly unconditionally by human worthiness or unworthiness, let man believe. But these points will be explained in more detail in the following objections.

At all times the further objection to absolution

this power is given, that is, to him who is a Christian. But who is a Christian? He that believeth. He that believeth hath the Holy Spirit. Every Christian, therefore, has the power, claimed by Pope and bishops, of forgiving or retaining sins. Well, then, some might say, we can pronounce absolution, baptize, preach, administer Communion. No, indeed! St. Paul says: 'Let all things be done decently and in order' (1 Cor. 14:40). We all have this power, but let no one presume to exercise it *publicly*, except he be called and chosen for this office by the congregation. But in *private* we may use this power. If, for instance, my brother comes to me, saying: 'Dear brother, I am vexed in my conscience, give me a word of absolution.' I am free to do this and tell him the Gospel, how that he should take hold of Christ's work, believing that the righteousness of Christ is truly his own, and that his own sins are truly Christ's. This is, indeed, the greatest service I may do to my fellow-man." — That in the words, Matt. 18:18: "What ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and what ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" are addressed to Christians, it is evident both from the preceding words ("Hath he not heard the congregation") and from the following words ("Where two or three are gathered together in my name"). And as for Matt. 16:19: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven", one can only wonder that it was possible not only for the Romans but also for Protestants (e.g. Meyer on this passage) to refer these words to a prerogative of Peter, be it as an apostle or as a head of the apostles or as a representative of the apostles. According to the whole context, the prerogative is described here not of an apostle, but of a believer in Christ, v. 13-17.

828) Smalc. Art, pp. 341, 67-69 [[Trigl. 523](#) ]; [Der Lutheraner 1850, p. 117](#); Luther. [St. L. X, 1235 f.](#), [1243](#), [1579](#), [1590](#).

829) Joh. 20:21: Luke 24:47.

has been raised, that the forgiveness of sins is acknowledged to be a prerogative of God. If we were to concede to men the power and right to pronounce the forgiveness of sins on other men, we would erroneously, even blasphemously, transfer to men what is God's alone. — To this objection must be replied,⁸³⁰⁾ that the forgiveness of sins is indeed a divine prerogative. God alone, against whose commandment sins have been committed, can forgive sinners their sins. No creature in heaven or on earth, no power in this world, not even an angel or archangel, can forgive sins. Whom God does not forgive, his sins remain unforgiven, even if all creatures would speak absolution in a unanimous chorus. But the question is whether God exercises his prerogative directly or indirectly. And here the Scripture says: indirectly, namely through the word of reconciliation, which came about through Christ, through the word of the gospel. God has commanded this word to be proclaimed to men, to his church. To men Christ says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Therefore Christ also says to men, "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them." Both, then, stand established: both this, that God alone forgives sin, and that God does this through his gospel entrusted to men for preaching. And if someone "reads" absolution from scriptural words — it stands, after all, in every Evangelical passage — he has absolution through men, namely, through the word of the prophets and apostles, not through an immediate "*interior Spiritus illuminatio*."

More on the periphery is the objection that absolution is easily abused by the absolvers for carnal security, and on the other hand it is used to nourish "priestly pride" in the absolvers. — As far as the first objection is concerned, it must be admitted that absolution, together with confession, has often been used and will continue to be used in the future to cover up the inner apostasy from grace by outward churchiness. But all other forms of witnessing to the Gospel, the sermon of the Gospel, baptism and the Lord's Supper, were and are exposed to the same abuse. As far as the touching of the priestly pride is concerned, this

830) Luther, [St. L. XI, 758 f.](#); [XIII, 2438](#).

objection applies to the Roman caricature of absolution, which attributes the power of absolution to a priesthood above Christians and created by the pope. The Christian power of absolution, however, is an authority that Christ has given to all believers, and in the public exercise of which the acting persons are only servants (*ministri*) and agents of the Christians.

Finally, an objection has been and is raised against absolution, which is probably the most widespread and also makes the greatest impression. The objection dresses itself in this form: "No man is a searcher of hearts or omniscient. Therefore, no man can know whether the person to be absolved has true repentance and true faith in his heart. Therefore no man should presume to absolve another man." — This objection is based on the idea that absolution is based on the repentance and faith of the absolver. On the other hand, it should be noted that absolution is not based on the state of man's heart, but only on the state of God's heart. But we know God's heart very well. Not as if we were omniscient, but because God has revealed His heart to us in the Gospel. From the Gospel we know for certain that God through Christ, before repentance and faith, is perfectly reconciled to all men and every human individual, that is, does not impute their sin to them, but forgives it, and that all Christians, thus also their public ministers, have the divine command to proclaim God's reconciled heart, namely the forgiveness of sins, to all the world, especially also to those who expressly confess themselves sinners and desire absolution. Therefore the spoken absolution, as Luther often expresses it, is in no case a "false key". There is not one man to be found among all peoples and in all parts of the heavens in regard to whom we have spoken an untruth, if we not only say to him, but also swear to him in the name of God: "God is reconciled to thee through Christ, imputeth not thy sins unto thee, but forgiveth thy sins." If he does not believe it, that is his pity. But it remains true that God is reconciled to him through Christ and that he should believe the reconciliation that has taken place on the divine command.⁸³¹⁾ As Luther rightly reminds us, the idea of the "wrong key" comes

831) 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Mark. 16:15-16.

only from the fact that we base absolution on our repentance, our faith, our renewal, in short, our subjective nature and worthiness, instead of on Christ's perfect work of reconciliation.

We see, therefore, where the harm actually lies. Those who take offense at absolution lack the biblical concept of the general and perfect reconciliation of the world through the substitutionary satisfaction of Christ. They generally address Christ as the reconciler of men. They also ascribe to Christ's atoning work a "great" effect with God. Christ, however, is said to have "effectively" initiated a new "relationship" between God and man, as they like to address it in our time. In other words, the situation is understood as if Christ's work of atonement had caused a tendency in God to forgive sins; but this tendency would only then change into a real forgiveness of sins in God's heart when men had also changed their attitude towards God. The human change of mind, which is supposed to bring about the complete change in God's heart, is for some repentance and faith, for others, who have distanced themselves somewhat further from the Christian faith, renewal and sanctification, at least in principle. This is connected with the fact that the Gospel is not presented as the proclamation or forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, but as the announcement of a divine "plan of salvation" or as a proclamation of conditions, through the fulfillment of which man would attain the forgiveness of sins. Kirn, for example, also addresses a "historically perfected" reconciliation through Christ, but then limits the "perfected" reconciliation to the fact that it "makes the pardon of sinners morally possible forever." Pardon becomes a fact "insofar as the foundation of salvation, once accomplished, carries within itself the power to transform the life of humanity into its Godly form."⁸³² But all these limitations of world reconciliation to a mere inclination to forgive sins on the part of God or to a mere enabling of the same do not do justice to the statements of Scripture. According to the Scriptures, the world reconciliation of 1900 years ago

832) Grundriß der Dogmatik, p. 118.

"historically perfected" reconciliation in the divine forgiveness of sins itself. The words: God "did not impute their sins to them," μη λογιζόμενος αυτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, which authentically explain the words: "God was in Christ and reconciled the world to himself," do not read of a mere possible, but of an actual forgiveness of sins in the heart of God, which happened then when God was in Christ and reconciled the world to himself. Therefore, the Gospel is not the presentation of a mere "plan of salvation" or the presentation of conditions by the fulfillment of which man finally arrives at the forgiveness of sins, but the Gospel is an absolution of sins addressed to the whole world, which is to be believed by men. It is to be preached "among all nations" not merely of the forgiveness of sins, but the forgiveness of sins itself, εδει κηρυχθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Χριστοῦ μετάνοιαν καὶ ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.⁸³³) Luther therefore says of the pastor who preaches the gospel that he cannot open his mouth without continually forgiving sin. (XI. 587.) And from here, that is, from the biblical concept of the reconciliation of the world and the gospel, the objection to absolution ceases. Without the understanding of these basic biblical truths, the open or secret opposition to absolution will not fall silent. We should not forget this also for our ministry practice. The experience we have in our American Lutheran congregations teaches us two things: 1. there is also in our country secret and open opposition to the general and private absolution that is common in our country. 2) The open and secret opposition is removed when we present the biblical doctrine of the perfect reconciliation of the world through Christ by public teaching, either from the pulpit or in congregational meetings, and then show that the gospel is nothing less than the divinely commanded presentation of the forgiveness of sins, "which all and everyone in particular are to accept [by faith]."⁸³⁴)

833) Luke 24:46-47.

834) Luther, XXI b, 1849. Luther remarks on Luke 24:47: "Absolution is nothing other than the sermon and proclamation of the forgiveness of sins, which Christ commands to be preached and heard here. But because such sermons are necessary to be preserved in the Church, the

It is of the greatest practical importance for every Christian to recognize and hold the relationship of faith to absolution. And what applies to absolution applies to the Gospel in general in every form of witnessing. It is also true of baptism. For baptism is also absolution, and private absolution at that, because the individual person (ἐκάστος) is baptized "for the remission of sins."⁸³⁵ Likewise, the Lord's Supper is private absolution because the communicants, as individuals, receive Christ's body given for them and Christ's blood shed for them "for the remission of sins."⁸³⁶ Now it is important for every Christian to recognize and hold fast, first, that faith belongs to the salutary use of absolution and the means of grace in general; God does not want the forgiveness of sins offered by Him to be despised, but to be accepted through faith. On the other hand, the Christian must not be misled into thinking that absolution and the means of grace in general are based on his faith or on something that is in him. The latter thought denies Christ in his perfect work of reconciliation and turns everything upside down in the acquisition of salvation. Christianity becomes a groundless subjectivism. Luther calls the faith that turns into its own object or ground of trust

one should also keep the absolution; for there is no other distinction here, except that the word which is otherwise preached publicly and generally to everyone in the sermon of the Gospel, is said in absolution to one or more persons in particular who desire it. As then Christ ordained that such a sermon of the forgiveness of sins should go forth and resound everywhere and at all times, not only generally over a whole multitude, but also individually, where such people find need of it: as ... He says, "Whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven them." (XI, 721.)

835) Acts 2:38.

836) Matt. 26:27-28. Luther on the character of baptism and the Lord's Supper as private absolution: "To preach forgiveness of sins means nothing else than to absolve from sins; which also happens in baptism and sacrament (the Lord's Supper), which are also ordained to show and assure us of such forgiveness of sins. Thus to be baptized or to receive the sacrament is also an absolution, in that forgiveness is promised and assured to each one in particular by Christ's name and command; which you should hear where and how often you need it, and accept and believe it as if you heard it from Christ himself." (XI, 722.)

as an apostasy from Christianity. He writes:⁸³⁷⁾ "It is true that one should believe for baptism, but one should not be baptized on faith. It is a very different thing to have faith and to rely on faith and thus to be baptized from it. He who is baptized on faith is not only uncertain, but also an idolatrous, disbelieving Christian, for he trusts and builds on his own, namely on the gift that God has given him, and not on God's Word alone, just as another trusts and builds on his strength, wealth, power, wisdom, holiness, which are also gifts given to him by God." Luther says the same of both baptism and the Lord's Supper in the Large Catechism⁸³⁸⁾: "I myself and all who are baptized must also speak before God in this way: I come here in my faith and also in the faith of others; nor can I rely on the fact that I believe and that many people ask for me, but I rely on the fact that it is your word and command; just as I go to the sacrament, not from my faith, but on Christ's word, whether I am strong or weak, I let God rule. But this I know, that he bid me go, eat, and drink, and give me his body and blood; this will not lie or deceive me.... Therefore it is ever presumptuous, foolish spirits who thus conclude: where faith is not right, neither must baptism be right. Just as if I wanted to conclude: If I do not believe, then Christ is nothing.... rather, turn it around and conclude thus: For this very reason baptism is something and right, that one has received it wrongly. For if it were not right in itself, it could not be abused. So it is said: Abusus non tollit, sed confirmat substantiam, Abuse does not take away the essence, but confirms it." And specifically of absolution Luther writes: "Afterwards think that the key or forgiveness of sins does not stand on our repentance and worthiness, as they teach and practice, for that is quite Pelagian, Turkish, pagan, Jewish, Anabaptist, enthusiastic and anti-Christian, but again that our repentance, work, heart and what we are, should build on the key and with all our heart confidently rely on it as on God's word. ... You should repent, that is true, but that therefore the forgiveness of sins should be certain

837) St. L. XVII, 2213. 838) M., 494, 56 ff. [Trigl. 747, Inf. Bap., 56 ff.

and confirm the work of the key, that is to forsake the faith and deny Christ. He will not forgive and give you sin for your sake, but for his own sake, out of pure grace, through the key." We must not think that Luther is speaking hyperbolically when he addresses denying Christ and uses the predicates "pagan," "Turkish," etc., if we base the forgiveness of sins on repentance and faith. Christianity differs from all pagan religions by the doctrine that God is already reconciled to all men through Christ and offers forgiveness of sins in the Gospel, in which faith can only be considered as a means of reception (*medium ληπτικόν*). The forgiveness of sins already present through Christ and offered in the means of grace is the object or foundation of faith. He who reverses this relationship, and bases the forgiveness of sins on repentance and faith, certainly regards the matter as if God first became perfectly gracious to man for the sake of repentance and faith. With this, however, the Christian religion is again classified among the pagan religions of works.

According to this, the much-discussed question is to be answered whether absolution is to be named and pronounced conditionally or unconditionally. The question has already been touched upon repeatedly in another context.⁸³⁹⁾ First of all, it must be remembered that, as the expression "conditional will of grace", so also the expression "conditional absolution" has been used in various senses. Luther, too, says in the counsel to the Nuremberg Council:⁸⁴⁰⁾ "Every absolution, both general or private, has the condition of faith," but in this, as Luther immediately adds, faith is "only so much as accepts the absolution and says yes to it." In other words, faith is necessary on the part of the man (*ex parte hominis*) for the reception or acceptance of absolution. Then the expression "conditional absolution" has been used in the sense that absolution is based on repentance and faith. Luther cannot find words enough to reject conditional absolution in this sense, as is evident from the words just quoted. Also within the Lutheran Church, e.g. Paul Tarnov has asserted

839) Cf. II, 36 f., 652, 666.

840) St. L. XXI b, 1847 ff.

that absolution was to be pronounced conditionally. Christian Chemnitz countered him very decisively.⁸⁴¹⁾ The latter's striking refutation of Tarnov is communicated by Walther in "Lehre und Wehre" under the heading "Is Absolution to be pronounced categorically or hypothetically?"⁸⁴²⁾ Christian Chemnitz's exposition is summarized in the sentence: "As Baptism and the Lord's Supper are given to everyone categorically after external confession of the mouth and actions, and no one speaks conditionally to the adult: 'If you have true repentance and truly believe, I baptize you,' or: 'Take this, this is Christ's body,' no one who outwardly confesses true repentance with his mouth and gestures is to be absolved conditionally, but categorically. For even if one were a hypocrite, as can sometimes happen, and pretended to repent, nevertheless absolution on God's part remains valid and begins to be powerful for salvation when that pretense has given way to a true confession. For 'God's gifts and calling may not repent of him', Rom. 11:29, 'so that God is true and all men false', Rom. 3:4." Walther counts "conditional absolution" among the "indirect deviations" from the Christian doctrine of justification. He himself says: "If the pastor has strong doubts whether the penitent is penitent and sincere, without being able to convict and reject him, the pastor must not try to help his conscience by adding all kinds of conditions or even warnings and threats to the formula of absolution."⁸⁴³⁾ Tarnov justified his advocacy of conditional absolution by saying, "Even in common and public sermons, forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to no one but the truly faithful."⁸⁴⁴⁾ According to this, faith in the forgiveness of sins would have to be there before the preaching of the forgiveness of sins. Tarnov and all those who have addressed similarly have not realized that they are assuming an impossibility. Faith is a relative concept. It arises and exists only on the basis of its pre-existing object. Just as we can believe facts unknown

841) Deyling reports that it was "the almost general opinion" of the old Lutheran theologians that the formula of absolution should be properly categorical. *Institutiones prud. pastoralis* III, 4, 38, p. 447.

842) *Lehre und Wehre* 1876, p. 193 ff.

843) *Pastorale*, p. 164.

844) *L. u. W.* 1876, p. 195.

to us only when they are reported or proclaimed to us, so also faith in the wonderful fact that God forgives us sin by grace, for Christ's sake, without works of the law, can arise only when it is proclaimed to us beforehand, not merely as a probability but as a fact, that God forgives us sin by grace, for Christ's sake, without any consideration of our subjective condition. In order for this faith to come into being, Christ has repentance preached in his name, as well as the forgiveness of sins, and therefore Scripture says that faith comes from the sermon, and therefore the Apology also says Scripturally: *Fides concipitur et confirmatur per absolutionem, per auditum evangelii*, faith is received and strengthened by absolution, by hearing the Gospel.⁸⁴⁵⁾ The address that forgiveness of sins can be proclaimed or promised only to those who are already believers is one of those addresses that perpetuate themselves from mouth to mouth and from generation to generation without one becoming aware of their futility. It belongs to the Reformed camp, where one knows of an immediate communication of grace and bases the means of grace on faith. It is unseemly in the Lutheran Church, which teaches that faith is based in every case on the means of grace, that is, on the forgiveness of sins promised in the means of grace. Where the address within the so-called Lutheran Church is serious, it is certainly based on the idea that the Gospel is an announcement of conditions by the performance of which man still partially acquires the forgiveness of sins. — Our own way of absolution has been asserted against the categorical form of absolution. But if, before absolution, we ask those to be absolved whether they sincerely repent of their sins, believe in Jesus Christ, and have the good, earnest intention to amend their sinful lives henceforth, we do not mean to base the forgiveness of sins on repentance, faith, and the amendment of life. This would contradict the confessors' own confession, because they desire mercy through God's "boundless mercy and through the holy, innocent, bitter suffering and death of Jesus Christ". With those words we only want to express that we do not want to help the sure sinners to strengthen in their

845) The Apology, p. 173, 42 [[Trigl. 263, XII, 42](#) [🔗](#)].

carnal security, but to absolve poor sinners to the consolation of their broken hearts. Any other interpretation of those words would contradict the Gospel of grace and would not comfort the consciences, but would only drive them into the sea of doubt.

Three kinds of people meet in the assertion that the promise of the gospel or the forgiveness of sins is conditioned by a good quality in man: the Romanists, the Calvinists and the Synergists. They differ only in the naming of the conditions. The Romanists base their absolution on the contritio cordis, confessio oris and satisfactio operis. They let the effect of the sacraments depend specifically on the fact that the man removes the obstacle to the effectiveness of the sacraments (obicem non ponit). The Calvinists let the promise of the gospel be conditioned by immediate enlightenment or rebirth, the Synergists by right personal conduct: self-determination, cessation of willful reluctance, lesser guilt, etc. All three parties, therefore, also describe the Gospel not as the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, which concerns all men, but as an announcement of conditions which man must perform before the promise of the Gospel concerns him. Rome in the *Tridentinum* pronounces a curse on anyone who takes the gospel "as if the gospel were even a mere and unconditional promise of eternal life, without the condition of keeping the commandments of God."⁸⁴⁶⁾ Calvinists and Synergists are equally firm in emphasizing the conditional nature of the gospel through human performance. Calvinist Charles Hodge says of the gospel, "Being a proclamation of the *terms* on which God is willing to save sinners, and an exhibition of the *duty* of fallen men in relation to that plan, it of necessity binds all those who are in the condition which the plan contemplates. It is in this respect analogous to the moral *law*." The same: "This general call of the Gospel" is "a general amnesty on *certain conditions*."⁸⁴⁷⁾ Theodor Zahn, a recent synergist, writes thus⁸⁴⁸⁾ of the forgiveness of sins through the

846) *Sessio IV, can. 20: quasi evangelium sit nuda et absoluta promissio vitae aeternae sine conditione observationis mandatorum.*

847) *Systematic Theol., II, 642 sq.*

848) In the *Commentary on John 20:23*.

Gospel: "The gospel ... proclaims to men a general amnesty of God and offers them the remission of their guilt of sin on the part of God, but does this from the outset and always only under the condition of the μετάνοια and that is, repentant faith of the hearers. But since repentant faith, like sinning, which as guilt burdens man, is a personal conduct against God ..., the remission of sins offered by the preachers of the Gospel, in spite of the universality of God's and Jesus' intention of salvation, also applies from the outset not to all, but ... always only to some men, namely, to those who are willing to fulfill the condition set." Other synergists give the name facultas se applicandi ad gratiam, self-decision, personal self-setting, necessary point of connection in man, receptivity to the gospel, etc., to the condition set. In short, Romanists, Calvinists, and Synergists agree in allowing the promise of the gospel to be conditioned by human performance, that is, in turning the gospel into works doctrine. The Calvinists, to be sure, maintain very firmly that they teach an immediately and irresistibly wrought regeneration precisely for the purpose of thus excluding from the outset all human cooperation in the attainment of salvation. We have also seen that with this decisive assertion they make an impression on newer historians of dogma.⁸⁴⁹⁾ But just as decidedly, we must repeat that there is a self-deception here. Since the immediate spiritual effect is not a reality but a human imagination, the immediate spiritual effect actually and in every concrete case comes down to a production out of one's own ego, that is, to work-driving and work-teaching, as in the case of the Romanists and Synergists.

Therefore, it is not an accurate representation of the real state of affairs when the difference between Reformed and Lutherans is determined to the effect that the former teach only an announcement, the latter a forgiveness of sins through the gospel or absolution. In fact, the Reformed also teach no announcement of the forgiveness of sins, but only a proclamation of conditions by the fulfillment of which man turns to himself for the forgiveness of sins. A factual right to the expression "announcement of the forgiveness of sins"

849) p. 200.

only the Lutherans have, who teach and hold that forgiveness of sins is available to all men without exception through Christ's vicarious satisfaction, and that therefore the gospel offers and promises forgiveness of sins to all men without exception, regardless of their subjective condition. The dogmatist, whether he stands in the Lutheran or Reformed camp, owes it to his hearers, respectively his readers, to clear up all misleading terminologies as far as possible.

Individual comments on the doctrine of the means of grace. ^

We would like to draw your attention to the following individual points.

I.

In the doctrine of the means of grace, especially in the "question" of whether absolution is to be pronounced conditionally or unconditionally, we are confronted with the fact that one and the same scriptural words are used quite differently, depending on whether the biblical concept of the gospel is held fast or not. We refer to the conditional and imperative sentences of Evangelical content, such as: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," "Believe on the Lord Jesus Lord, and thou and thy house shall be saved," "If thou believest in thine heart that God hath raised Jesus Christ from the dead, thou shalt be saved".⁸⁵⁰⁾ Those who have and keep the law in their hearts in these Evangelical doctrines teach and practice as if man must first have faith and first make sure of his faith before he may dare to apply to himself the forgiveness of sins acquired from Christ. In other words, they base the gospel on faith instead of faith on the gospel. They make faith its own object in justification. Consciously or unconsciously, they cherish the thought as if God would be completely gracious to man only when man has fulfilled the condition of faith. In doing so, they consider themselves to be the people who "duly emphasize faith" and "let it come into its own." The effect of this way of teaching "gospel" is that the sinner struck by the law now searches in his heart for faith, but never finds it there, because faith always arises and exists only through the forgiveness of sins existing before faith

850) Mark. 16:16; Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9.

through Christ and promised in the gospel. The forgiveness of sins, which exists through Christ and is promised in the gospel, arises and exists. Those who have and hold to the biblical concept of the gospel are quite different. When they have to answer the question, "What must I do to be saved?" they use those Evangelical statements, "He who believes will be saved," etc. not to announce conditions to be fulfilled beforehand, but they use them as they are meant, namely, as a means to provoke and entice faith and to call it forth, in the sense: You do not need to do anything more; just believe; do not look at yourself at all, at your worthiness or unworthiness, not even at your faith;⁸⁵¹⁾ God accepts you without all your own doing out of grace for Christ's sake. In other words, they do not refer the inquirer after grace to his faith, but to the object of faith, namely, to Christ in his perfect work of atonement, or, which is the same thing, to the objective promise of grace. Thus the Evangelical conditionals and imperatives are rightly used, namely, in the sense of Christ's words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you." ⁸⁵²⁾ "Him that cometh to me I will not cast out." ⁸⁵³⁾ By this modus docendi alone, which also alone corresponds to the character of the gospel, faith is wrought in hearts stricken by the law and, where it already exists, is strengthened. By that other way faith is not called forth, but made impossible, because its correlate is withheld from it. Schneckenburger states at this point an essential difference between the Lutheran and the Reformed doctrines. He takes the view that this way of first looking at faith and first making sure of faith before one can consider God to be merciful does not belong in the Lutheran church, but in the Reformed church. He says:⁸⁵⁴⁾ "The Lutheran pious person does not make his faith itself the object of reflection again, namely as the believer, but all immediate activity of faith is for him that on the object of it, on the divine promise, on grace in Christ. The Reformed

851) As Luther says, in order to get rid of the law, he imagines the matter "as if in his heart there were no quality at all called faith or love. (Corp. Ref. II, 502 sq.)

852) Matt. 11:28.

853) Joh. 6:37.

854) Comparative Illustration I, 51. 57. 50.

reflects on his faith itself as his condition, his life-activity." Faith "is regarded by the Reformed as a quality, as a habitus, of which self-certainty is obtainable only by reflective means, namely, by the actions which it expels from itself." "For the contestation of weak faith, the orthodox Lutherans have as the last means of strengthening, not an inner operation and reflection, but always only the Word and Sacrament." This is true.

It should be added, however, that the Reformed way also continually sought to penetrate the Lutheran Church on this point. If Paul Tarnov, as we saw,⁸⁵⁵⁾ advocated that absolution should be pronounced conditionally, he also made the attempt to base faith on faith rather than on the Gospel. And Carpzov counters the same perversity when he points out that faith, insofar as it justifies, has for its object not the forgiveness of sins assumed, but the forgiveness of sins to be assumed.⁸⁵⁶⁾ And as far as the Lutheran Church of America is concerned, the Norwegian Synod had to defend against members of other Scandinavian synods the truth that the right use and benefit, but not the essence of absolution, depended on the faith of the man.⁸⁵⁷⁾ — Finally, it should be remembered that even those who teach rightly of the doctrines of the Gospel are still tempted in practice to base faith on faith. If we have a feeling of faith, we think God is gracious and we want to jump over the walls. If the feeling of faith has diminished, and instead we feel in our conscience the accusations of the law, we consider God ungracious and we want to despair, just as if there were no gospel that promises forgiveness of sins for the sake of Christ's righteousness alone. Here the religion of the law, which is inherent in all men, asserts itself in us, according to which we place our confidence in the grace of God not in the "Christ outside us" but in the "Christ in us," in aliquid in nobis, and precisely in faith as a good

855) II, 666.

856) *Isagoge in libros symbol. p. 208 sq.* The quotation is reported II, 653, note 1531. Cf. also the warning of Hönecke, *Dogmatik III, 404*. The quotation is reported op. cit. note 1528.

857) *L. u. W. 1872*, p. 101 ff. [**sic!** Page # must be in error as this essay does not concern the Scandinavian synods nor the doctrine of absolution; it should be p. 161 ff. which concerns these subjects: *L. u. W. 1872, p. 161 ff.*; *1874, p. 138* ff.]

quality, want to found. We then, despite our official orthodoxy, do not think of the Gospel as an absolution spoken to the whole world of sinners, which presents itself as an object to faith, but as a proclamation of conditions, as "a general amnesty on certain conditions", by the fulfillment of which, for our part, God will only be fully gracious to us. In short, we turn the Evangelical conditional and imperative sentences into legal conditional and imperative sentences, and we take God's grace in Christ under lock and key, despite all talk of gospel and faith. This explains Luther's coarse words,⁸⁵⁸⁾ with which he advocates the objective validity of Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Absolution: "It is quite another thing to have faith and to rely on faith and thus to be baptized on it. Whoever is baptized on faith is not only uncertain, but also an idolatrous, denied Christian; for he trusts and builds on his own, namely on a gift which God has given him, and not on God's Word" (the promise of grace for Christ's sake) "alone, just as another builds and trusts on his strength, wealth, power, wisdom, holiness, which are nevertheless also gifts given to him by God." — Against this position of Luther's it has always been objected that the Scriptures themselves expressly demand the reflection on our faith and the fruits of faith. Scripture says: "Try yourselves whether you are in faith; test yourselves! Or do you not know yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you?"⁸⁵⁹⁾ Of course, this sermon should also remain in the Church until the Last Day. But at the same time we as Christian teachers should know that we are in a completely different area with this sermon. We do not preach the gospel to frightened sinners by enticing them to believe, but we warn those who want to become carnally secure against this carnal security and against self-deception. In other words, we are then preaching the law by punishing unbelief. "But the gospel is such a sermon, showing and giving nothing but grace and forgiveness in Christ."⁸⁶⁰⁾ In contrast, the punishment of unbelief and the warning against the same belongs in the law. "The law rebuketh unbelief, when one God's

858) St. L. XVII, 2213. 859) 2 Cor. 13:5.

860) Formula of Concord 635, 12. [Trigl. 955, F. C., Sol. Decl., V, 12

Word does not believe."⁸⁶¹) "Whoever, then, is well able in this art of separating the Law from the Gospel, set him on high and call him a Doctor of Holy Scriptures."⁸⁶²)

II.

Luther judges that all those who deny the forgiveness of sins through Word and Sacrament, and therefore also especially find the forgiveness of sins through men who handle Word and Sacrament annoying, do not consider God's Word to be God's Word, but respect it as mere human word.⁸⁶³) This judgment might seem unfair at first glance when we consider that the Reformed, for example, strongly emphasize the inspiration of Holy Scriptures. But Luther's judgment proves to be factually correct on closer consideration. It is just two things: to say in theory that the Scriptures are the Word of God, and to hold to this truth in practice. When the Reformed warn with Calvin against wanting to know for certain the will of God from the external word of the gospel, this warning is always based on the thought that the external word of the gospel as it stands in Scripture is not the Word of God. Those who truly believe God's Word to be God's Word certainly do not say that God's will of grace cannot be known for certain from it. Further: if the Reformed deny that sins are forgiven by baptism, this denial is based on the thought that the Word of God, which is at baptism and is expressly for the forgiveness of sins (εις ἄφεσιν αμαρτιῶν), is not God's Word. Further, when the Reformed make the charge that the Lutherans, with their doctrine of the forgiveness of sins by the mouth of man, take from God what is God's, this charge is based on the thought that God's Word, when men put it into their mouths and set it on course, is no longer God's Word, but the Word of man. So we will have to admit that Luther judges the situation correctly when he says: "Such thoughts of two keys" (namely, that the forgiveness of sins promised by men in the name of Christ is not God's forgiveness) "come from the fact that God's word is not considered to be God's word, but because it is spoken by men, one looks at it as if it were man's words and thinks that God is high above and far away,

861) A. a. O., 637, 19. [[Trigl. 957, F. C., Sol. Decl., V, 19](#) 

862) Luther. [St. L. IX, 802](#).

863) [St. L. XIX, 945](#); [XIII, 2441](#) and often.


far, far from such a word as is on earth, gazing up after it into heaven, and writing yet other keys."⁸⁶⁴) Thus, it is in the doctrine of the means of grace that it really becomes apparent whether we really believe God's Word, which He has given to His Church, to be God's Word. This is the case only if we believe and hold that God Himself is always present in His Word and Himself deals with us men, no matter how and through whom His Word comes to us. "Whether the Word," says Luther, "speak like men, it is not theirs, but God's Word. ... Therefore, if you want to have 'forgiveness of sins,' you must not climb up to heaven. ... God has put forgiveness of sins in Holy Baptism, in the Lord's Supper and in the Word. Yes, he has taken it into the mouth of every Christian man when he comforts you and promises you God's grace through the merit of Jesus Christ, so that you should accept and believe it no other way than if Christ himself had promised it to you with his mouth. ... Because they" ("the fanatical spirits and enthusiasts, Zwinglius, Ecolampadius and their crowd") "snatch away God's Word, they deprive themselves and others who let themselves be persuaded by them of all goods, the forgiveness of sins, baptism, the sacrament, the Lord Christ, and keep nothing of baptism and the sacrament but only the empty shells."⁸⁶⁵) Admittedly, it must be recognized and confessed here again that "the enthusiast" is still in all of us. To consider God's Word, where and how and by what means it comes to us, as God's Word, that is an art in which we have to learn anew every day. How very different and much more spiritual our Christian life would be if we always took God's Word, which comes to us in so many ways (through reading the Scriptures and Christian books, through public sermons, through intercourse with Christians, etc.), for God's Word with right earnestness! We recognize and lament in this lack, which we find among us, the alienation from God that still clings to us. But to expressly instruct people that they do not take the external Word of God for God's Word, but instead judge from God's will against themselves according to the so-called interior Spiritus illuminatio, that is a seduction into error, which the enemy of the church has set in course through Zwingli, Calvin, Andreas Osiander, Weigel and their followers and has so far kept in course.


864) St. L. XIX, 945. 865) St. L. XIII, 2439 ff.

III.

In dealing with the doctrine of absolution, the question arises again and again, even within the Lutheran Church: *Cui bono?* What is the use of absolution, if we teach with all our energy that through this special form of preaching the Gospel nothing more and nothing else is given than every believer already has through the general sermon and promise of the Gospel?⁸⁶⁶⁾ The objection is in line with several others, for example, the objection that baptism and the Lord's Supper are of no use, since the Christian already has the forgiveness of sins through faith in the mere word of the gospel and thus all the spiritual goods acquired from Christ. Those who raise this objection forget two things. First, they do not consider that the sermon of the gospel in the special form of absolution is Christ's order,⁸⁶⁷⁾ which is why the Lutheran Confession rightly says that it would be "against God" to dismiss absolution from the church.⁸⁶⁸⁾ Secondly, they do not consider that this order of Christ is based on a need of souls and does not have the purpose of making the order of means of grace as complicated as possible and taking a legal yoke on the necks of disciples. The factual situation is this: It is difficult to bring a man to true knowledge of his sins. But it is just as difficult to lead a human heart struck by God's law to the knowledge of God's grace in Christ and to maintain it in this knowledge. That is why the Smalcald Articles say that God, because He is "abundantly rich in grace," does not give counsel and help against sin merely in one way (*uno modo*), but in several ways: through the sermon of the forgiveness of sins in all the world, through baptism, through the Lord's Supper, and also through the power of the keys, as well as through the brotherly intercourse of Christians with one another.⁸⁶⁹⁾ In the [Tenth Synodal Report of the General Synod \[1860\]](#), two things are explained in detail: first, that through absolution nothing is given that is different and better in content than through the sermon of the Gospel; second, that through absolution, and especially through private absolution,

866) [Tenth Synodal Report of the General Synod 1860, p. 4.](#)


867) Joh. 20. 23. 868) Apol. 185, 3. [[Trigl. 281, Apol., VI, 3](#) 

869) M., p. 319: "Vom Evangelium." [[Trigl. 491, Part III, Art. IV](#) 

the relationship of the forgiveness of sins to one's own person is made easier for the hesitating sinner.⁸⁷⁰⁾ In the same report, however, it is also pointed out that both private confession and the binding of confession and absolution with the Lord's Supper

870) pp. 34 f. 37. 54 ff. In the latter place it says: "A parable can make clear the relationship of private absolution to general absolution in the sermon. General absolution through the sermon is like a rich man throwing a mass of gold pieces among a crowd with the intention that each one should receive a gold piece; he who takes it has it. But with private absolution it is like when the rich man's servant presses the gold piece into the hand of a timid person who does not dare to grab it. As here the individual has no better gold piece than the others, so also through the private absolution nothing different and better is given than through the sermon. It is a false distinction that is often made, that in the sermon the treasure of the forgiveness of sins is only proclaimed or even offered, but in the private absolution it is communicated. When Luther addresses the greater certainty of the forgiveness of sins in private absolution, he means nothing more than: It is more difficult for the believer to acquire consolation in the general sermon than in private absolution. ... The sacraments also are nothing but a visible word; their content is therefore quite the same as that of the word. That God has ordained, besides the Word, the sacraments in which he deals with the individual, he has taken into account the condition of the believers; for because in the weakness of this life it becomes more difficult for the believer to appropriate consolation when it is proclaimed to me in general to the multitude, therefore God, as Luther says, is not so meager, but has ordained that consolation be offered to the believer in all kinds of ways. In this we see God's wonderful condescension to the weakness of his believers; because he knows how difficult it is for them to grasp the consolation in the general sermon, therefore he has given private absolution, baptism and the Lord's Supper for the individual, so that everyone may know that here I am the person with whom God speaks and acts. ... To the objection that one does not understand why private absolution is so emphasized; one would not have to have a mind that could not accept and be comforted by public sermons just as well as by private absolution, it was replied: Then one cannot understand why Lord Christ instituted baptism and Holy Communion in addition to the sermon; for there is no essential difference between these and the sermon either. Then it must be wondered at that Christ, after the resurrection, says: "Tell his disciples and Peter"; then it must also be said that Peter had no understanding, that he could not appropriate the consolation, since it was brought to the apostles in general, to which he belonged; but Peter thought: You are no longer an apostle, therefore the Lord had the consolation brought to him in particular. Our ancients say: "It is not this that makes the Christian scruple whether the world is redeemed, but whether he himself is redeemed, that is, whether the general redemption also concerns him for his person."

is only a church order, not a divine one.⁸⁷¹⁾ Also with regard to the relationship between general confession and private confession, it is aptly stated there: "Even in general confession, as we use it before Holy Communion, there is in a certain sense a personal confession and a personal appropriation; for there one has before one a certain number of Christians who confess their sins, desire grace, and receive absolution; it is therefore, in regard to personal appropriation, something more than the general sermon, and one must be careful in the sermon about it not to touch God's sanctuary. Even to speak disparagingly of general confession is dangerous; I must not disparage the one in order to exalt the other: rather, let both remain in their high, glorious value."⁸⁷²⁾

871) The Apology 185, 5 [Trigl. 281, Apol., VI, 5 ]: "Of the telling of sins we have said above in our confession that it is not commanded." There, the Roman "scriptural proof" is examined and rightly declared "foolish and childish." See also Gibbons, The Faith of Our Fathers, p. 393 sqq. — Luther's clear exposition of "three kinds of confession" in his Sermon on Confession and the Sacrament (St. L., XI, 582 ff.): 1. Confession before God. This is so highly necessary that it should not linger for a moment, but go through the whole life of a Christian. It consists in condemning ourselves as worthy of death and hellish fire. By this confession we come before God, that he can no longer condemn us, but must be gracious to us; for if we judge or condemn ourselves, God no longer judges or condemns us. 2. Confession before one's neighbor. This is such a confession: if one has done wrong to his neighbor, he should confess it before him. This confession is also necessary and commanded. If this fruit is not there, faith and the first confession are not righteous either. 3. Confession, "which the pope has commanded, which is done secretly in the ears of the priests". This is not commanded by God. Papists had also invoked Luther to save their confession, because "Luther himself also praises and extols confession". To this Luther replied in a letter to the congregation at Esslingen (St. L., XXI a, 562 f.): "It is true that I have said that it is a good thing to confess. Again, I do not defend fasting, walking, eating meat, celebrating, etc., but so that such things may be done freely and no one who does none may do it as if he must do it in his conscience and in a mortal sin, as the pope rages with his ladders for the blind. ... Confess only confidently, fast cheerfully if you want, but do not think that it must be, and [you] do sin if you let it be." Yes, Luther says XI, 722: "To desire absolution is in itself enough confession," because to desire absolution is already so much as "to admit guilt and to confess that you are a sinner."

872) op. cit., p. 58. ?]

The Means of Grace in the Old Testament. ^

The gospel of Christ, that is, the divine message of the forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ, was the means of grace for the entire Old Testament period. This is what the Scriptures themselves teach us. It says: "All the prophets testify about Christ, that through his name all who believe in him shall receive forgiveness of sins."⁸⁷³⁾ Abraham believed in Christ,⁸⁷⁴⁾ and Moses wrote about him.⁸⁷⁵⁾ The Christians of the New Testament believe like Abraham and therefore, even though they are not bodily descended from Abraham, they are called "Abraham's children" (νιοί 'Αβραάμ)⁸⁷⁶⁾ and "Abraham's seed" (τον Αβραάμ σπέρμα).⁸⁷⁷⁾ In particular, in the New Testament Scriptures it is still emphasized that the Christian doctrine of justification, namely, justification by faith in Christ without works of the law, has witness throughout the Old Testament Scriptures, μαρτυρουμένη νπο τον νόμον και των προφητών.⁸⁷⁸⁾ The whole fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans is devoted to the special proof that the New Testament doctrine of justification is not a *Novum*, but also in all the Old Testament. Even during the Mosaic covenant of law, the promise of Christ as the means of grace remained in force, διαθήκην προκεκνωμένην νπο τον θεον εις Χριστόν ό ... νόμος ουκ άκυροί, εις τό καταργήσαι την έπαγγελίαν ["the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect"],⁸⁷⁹⁾ That the Jews, when Christ appeared in the fullness of time, did not believe in Him, Christ Himself attributes to the fact that they did not believe Moses's writings,⁸⁸⁰⁾ and the reason for the fact that even the

873) Acts 10:43.

874) Joh. 8:56: "Abraham, your father, rejoiced (ήγαλλιάσατο) that he should see my day, and he saw it and rejoiced." Luther (XI, 573): "Where and when did he see him? Not with bodily eyes, as the Jews understand it, but with the face of faith he recognized Christ, when it was said to him Gen. 22: 'Through your seed shall all the heathen be blessed.' ... The day of Christ is the time of the Gospel" (the time of the New Testament). So correctly also Luthardt on this passage But entered into the text is Luthardt's remark on και ειδεν και ιχάρη: "Realized was that joy on that time, of the Christ only after the death of Abraham."

875) John 5:46.

876) Gal. 3:7: οί εκ πίστεως, οντοί εϊαν νιοί Αβραάμ..

877) Gal. 3:29: Ει δε νμεϊς Χριστόν, άρα τον Αβραάμ σπέρμα εστέ....

878) Rom. 3:21.

879) Gal. 3:17.

880) Joh. 5:45-47.

disciples could not quite find themselves in the death and resurrection of Christ, Christ reveals with the words: "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"⁸⁸¹⁾ The same reason, namely non-observance of the words of Scripture, is present in all older and newer theologians, who do not recognize that since the Fall, throughout the whole period of the Old Testament, the Gospel of Christ was the means of grace given to men, and faith in this Gospel made men children of God. Of course, the newer world of theologians, of liberal and positive trend, gives itself the appearance of theological superiority especially on this point. It finds in all those who understand the Old Testament as Christ and the apostles a lack of "historical understanding" of the Old Testament revelation in general and a deficit in exegetical meticulousness in particular. But in fact it stands that the newer theology proceeds very unhistorically, transferring its own deficit in the understanding of the prophecies of Christ to the children of God of the Old Testament.⁸⁸²⁾ This is especially evident in the expositions with which one has tried to understand the Protoevangelium, Gen. 3:15. The "seed of the woman" is not meant to refer to the individual person of Christ, but "impersonally" to all mankind. We have already shown the impossibility of this conception in another context.⁸⁸³⁾ Here it should be pointed out that we have no right to attribute to Adam and Eve the lack of understanding that is manifested in the impersonal conception of the seed of the woman. When the first parents heard, in regard to the woman's seed, the mighty predicate that he would crush the serpent's head (הָאָדָם יִשָּׁכְכֶנָּה רֹאשׁ [HEBREW: Gen. 3:15]), they could not possibly think of an "impersonal subject." Impersonal subjects — we may also credit Adam and Eve with this realization — do not perform such deeds. In particular Adam and Eve could also not come to the thought that the "descendants of the woman" or the whole mankind will accomplish this enormous work. The factual situation was, in historical view, this: Adam and Eve knew from their own painful experience that the devil had overcome them while they were still intact and alive ((*in statu integritatis*)). How far

881) Luke 24:25.

882) Cf. Gerhard's *Summa gex V. T. Locus de ev.*, § 9.

883) [II, 622, note 1444](#).

from them, therefore, must have been the thought that a human race fallen into guilt and sin, doomed to death, or even a mere man, would redeem the guilt of sin and overcome death! The fact that newer theologians have this opinion and believe the fallen human race to be capable of such heroic deeds with regard to overcoming the guilt of sin and death is only due to the fact that they disregard the "historical situation" that existed at the time of the Fall. But surely we have no right to date this disregard of the situation backwards and also to ascribe it to Adam and Eve against their own experience. We certainly remain on the ground of the "historical view" if we assume that Adam and Eve were very attentive listeners to the promise of the woman's seed, which would make up for their terrible misfortune, and therefore also particularly noticed that in the promise God Himself appears as the agent. It is not a man or mankind, but God Himself who puts the enmity between the devil and his seed and the woman and her seed. The conception that the woman's seed will not be a mere man, but Jehovah Himself, Eve gives out as her conception when, at the birth of Cain, she calls out, "I have gotten the man, Jehovah." ⁸⁸⁴⁾ Thus we shall have to agree with Luther when he called the first promise after the Fall both "very light and bright" and "very dark.") Very dark it is in regard to the secondary circumstances, because nothing is said here yet of Abraham's seed, David's offspring, Mary's son, etc. It is very clear insofar as it promises a woman's seed in which God Himself is the agent, and which puts away the devil in his work of corrupting men, that is, man's guilt of sin and death. We have Gen. 3:15 of the matter according to 2 Cor. 5:19: "God was in Christ.

884) Luther (I, 296): "Although Eve did not have this hope" (that Cain was the promised seed of the woman) "it nevertheless follows from this that Eve was a holy woman and believed the promise of future salvation through the blessed seed." III, 653: "When Eve gave birth to her first son Cain, she did not think otherwise, that he was the man whom God promised and promised to her, who would avenge her on the serpent. Therefore she also says: 'I have gotten the man, the Lord,' the God of Jehovah, the seed of the woman."

885) St. L., I, 240 ff. Cf. also on Gen. 3:15 Luther's sermon of 1526; St. L. III, 650 ff.

and reconciled the world to himself."⁸⁸⁶) Luther says, "Behold Adam and Eve, full of sin and death; yet, because they hear the promise of the seed of the woman that should bruise the serpent's head, they hope for the very things we hope for, namely, that death will be abolished, sin will be blotted out, and righteousness, life, and peace will be restored. In this hope the first parents live and die, and are truly holy and justified also for this hope's sake."⁸⁸⁷) Luther, therefore, as far as the way to salvation is concerned, absolutely does not want to allow any difference between Adam's and Eve's faith and the faith of the New Testament Christians.⁸⁸⁸) Quenstedt expresses the same position thus: *Idem evangelium quoad substantiam, quod hodie in toto mundo praedicatur, etiam in Vetere Testamento et quidem a primis lapsi generis humani temporibus viguit et promulgatum est, quo gratia Dei, remissio peccatorum et salus una ac eadem in Christo mundi redemptore omnibus annunciata et oblata est omnesque in Vetere Testamento, quotquot iustificati et salvati sunt, iustificati et salvati sunt fide in Christi meritum, quod profuit, antequam fuit.* [[Google](#)]⁸⁸⁹) Those who have not come to this understanding of the Old Testament revelation of salvation should at least concede that it is the understanding of Christ and the apostles. That Luther and the old theologians allow a difference of degree between the Old and New Testaments with regard to the clarity of the revelation of the Gospel, they pronounce often enough.⁸⁹⁰) Also circumcision and the Passover were means of grace for the time of the Old Testament since their institution. Regarding circumcision, Gen. 17:7 says, "I will be your God," that is, your gracious God, who promises you forgiveness of sins through this sign of circumcision. That is why Paul calls circumcision a sign of the righteousness of faith,

886) Luther ([III, 66](#)): "The passage is absolution, so that God has absolved Adam and Eve and all of us. For if the seed is so strong that it crushes the serpent's head, it also crushes all his power; then the devil is overcome and all harm is gone that Adam had, and comes to stand where he stood before."

887) [I, 241](#). 888) [III, 661](#); [XII, 494 ff.](#)

889) *Systema*. II, 1013 sq.

890) Luther [I, 236 ff.](#) [1008](#). [1092](#). [1526](#). [1585](#). Quenstedt (II, 1014): *Evangelium in Vetere Testamento sufficienter clare est propositum, sed non in eo perspicuitatis gradu, quo in Novo Testamento refulget.* [[Google](#)]

σφραγίδα τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς πίστεως,⁸⁹¹⁾ And as for the Passover, it is clear from Ex. 12:21 ff. that the children of Israel were spared the wrath of God, not because they were Jews, but because of the blood of the Passover lamb. V. 23-24: "The Lord will go around and plague the Egyptians. And when he shall see the blood on the threshold, and on the two posts, he will pass over before the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come into your houses to plague. Therefore keep this way for you and your children forever." Therefore Luther says: "It is an error that the sacraments of the New Testament are different from the sacraments of the Old Testament according to the power of the meaning" (namely, as signs of God's grace ordered by God). ... "Our and the Fathers' signs or sacraments have an attached word of promise, which requires faith and cannot be fulfilled by any other work. Therefore they are signs or sacraments of justification."⁸⁹²⁾ As by the word of the Messiah to come, so also by circumcision and the Passover, the sacraments of the Old Testament, the forgiveness of sins, were offered and appropriated by believers.

The Means of Grace and Prayer. ^

The Scriptural doctrine of prayer was presented in its main points in the doctrine of sanctification and good works.⁸⁹³⁾ Here we still go into the question of whether prayer should be placed alongside Word and Sacrament as a means of grace. This occurs, for example, in Hodge when he says:⁸⁹⁴⁾ "The means of grace, according to the standards of our Church, are the Word, Sacraments, and prayer." Shedd quotes from the *Larger Catechism*, Qu. 154: "The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to His Church the benefits of His mediation are all His

891) Rom. 4:11. Baier (III, 426): *Finis cuius sacramenti circumcisionis proximus isque principalis erat gratiae foederatis de remissione peccatorum collatio. Gen. 17, 7 promittit Deus, se fore Deum Abrahami circumcidendi et seminis eius circumcidendi, quod imprimis de ... adoptione in foedus gratiae exponi debet.* [Google]

892) *Opp. v. a. V, 62: Error est sacramenta novae legis differre a sacramentis veteris legis penes efficaciam significationis. ... Nostra et patrum signa seu sacramenta habent annexum verbum promissionis, quod fidem exigit et nullo opere alio impleri potest, ideo sunt signa et sacramenta iustificationis.* [Google] Cf. St. L. XIX, 62 f.


893) p. 94 ff. 894) *Systematic Theol*, III, 466; cf. p. 708.

ordinances, especially the Word, Sacraments, and *prayer*; all which are made effectual to the elect for their salvation."⁸⁹⁵) The Methodists refer to "their special means of grace" as the "love feasts and class meetings." As means of grace prescribed by God they mention "prayer, searching the Holy Scriptures, the Lord's Supper, fasting, Christian entertainment."⁸⁹⁶) In contrast, Meusel states under "Means of Grace":⁸⁹⁷) "It is confusing and to be rejected when newer ones, following the procedures of Schleiermacher ... still include prayer in the name of Jesus among the means of grace. Objective and subjective, divine and human action must not be coordinated and confounded in this way." This objection is justified. If we also reckon, as the expression "sacrament," so also the expression "means of grace" among the church termini in the use of which freedom must be allowed,⁸⁹⁸) it is certainly not a recommendable *modus docendi* to place prayer alongside Word and sacrament as means of grace, because disparate things are thereby coordinated. Word and sacrament are the means by which God deals with us men, namely, offering to men the forgiveness of sins purchased by Christ, and by such offering producing in them faith and strengthening it. Word and sacrament are, as Luther used to address it, God's work for us. Through prayer, on the other hand, believers act with God. Prayer is an activity of the faith of Christians. If prayer is placed next to word and sacrament as a means of grace, then prayer is easily understood as a supplement to God's grace, namely as if God were only completely reconciled through prayer and made willing to forgive man's sin. The widespread error is encouraged, as if God had not already completely reconciled the world to Himself through Christ,

895) [Dogmatic Theology, II, 561](#)

896) The detailed quotations in [Günther, Symbolik 4, p. 272](#) [[Popular Symbolics p. 285](#)].

897) *Handlexicon* III, 5.

898) Cf. Apology 204, 16. 17 [[Trigl. 311, Apol. XIII, 16-17](#) Hollaz's distinction between means of grace in the narrower and wider sense: *Media stricte dicta ex parte Dei δωτικά seu salutem exhibentia sunt Verbum Dei et sacramenta; ex parte nostri medium ληπτικόν seu oblatam salutem apprehendens est fides merito Christi innixa. Media salutis late dicta sunt εισαγωγικά sive executiva et in regnum gloriae introducentia, scii, mors, resurrectio mortuorum, extremum iudicium et consummatio seculi.* [[Google](#)] (*Examen, De mediis salutis in genere, qu. 2.*)

and as if, on the part of mankind, in order to be reconciled to God, more is needed than faith in the reconciliation brought about by Christ. The coordination of prayer with the means of grace can easily be made serviceable to the soul-destroying practice of referring terrified souls struck by God's law to prayer for grace instead of to Word and Sacrament, thus creating the idea that through prayer, as through a work done by man, forgiveness of sins is obtained. — It has been objected that in the Scriptures the attainment of the forgiveness of sins through prayer is clearly taught. Not only is it said in general, "Ask, and it shall be given you," but it is also said, especially with regard to the attainment of the forgiveness of sins in the fifth petition, "Forgive us our trespasses," by which Christ not only means to ask for forgiveness of sins, but also at the same time promises that through such petition forgiveness of sins will be granted to us. To this it must be said: Of course, through prayer we also obtain forgiveness of sins, but not insofar as prayer is a work done by man, but insofar as in the petition "Forgive us our trespasses" there is a willingness of God's grace in Christ worked by the Holy Spirit, a velle remissionem peccatorum, that is, faith in the Gospel. Thus it also stands with the fifth petition that man without works is justified by faith alone. Furthermore, it has been found strange that, according to Scripture, on the one hand, prayer is the basis of confidence in God's grace ("Our Father"), while on the other hand, the forgiveness of sins is still requested or desired in prayer. The apparent contradiction is resolved when we look at the actual condition of a Christian. Because Christians still sin, and just as sin still registers in their conscience as guilt, the faith that is still present in the heart reacts by fleeing into the promise of grace of the Gospel. — It should be noted how faith, in so far as it asks for the forgiveness of sins, places itself with the reconciliation that has taken place through Christ and with the means of grace. It does not place itself alongside Christ's work of reconciliation. Nor does he place himself beside the means of grace, nor does he place himself in the place of the means of grace, but on the contrary, he bases himself on Christ's perfect merit and the means of grace. He asks that God would forgive him for Christ's sake and according to his promise of grace in the

Word. As soon as prayer ignores the perfect acquisition of grace by Christ and its presentation through the promise of the gospel, it acquires the following unchristian characteristics: it is no longer a prayer in the name of Jesus, but against the name of Jesus; it is not an activity of faith, but of unbelief toward the gospel; it becomes *eo ipso* a work by which man thinks he can acquire God's grace, and thus an abomination before God. The more zealous the prayer, ignoring the full grace acquired from Christ and its presentation in the word of the gospel, the greater the abomination. Christ characterizes such a nature of prayer in the words, "When ye pray, babble not much, as the heathen do: for they think they shall be heard if they speak much."⁸⁹⁹⁾ Chemnitz writes: "The Augsburg Confession firmly rebukes (*serio improbat*) those who either seek or teach to seek reconciliation with God and forgiveness of sins outside the ministry of the Word and sacraments."⁹⁰⁰⁾ — That Calvinists, like Hodge, name prayer as a means of grace apart from word and sacrament is not accidental. In rejecting common grace and accepting the immediate communication of grace and the action of the Spirit, they cannot refer to the promise of grace in the objective Word of God, but must refer sinners stricken by God's law, in their inquiring after grace, as to other human activities, so also to prayer, in order to evoke by these activities inner moods and feelings, which at most, namely, as long as there is no real knowledge of sin, can be taken for characteristics of sonship with God. Likewise, it is understandable when synergists, whether they call themselves Reformed or Lutheran or otherwise, show a tendency to call or use prayer as a means of grace because, according to their doctrinal position, they think that the bestowal of divine grace is also dependent on human activity, *scil.*, personal self-determination, right conduct, etc. It is well known that the majority of revival preachers from the Reformed sects point the souls inquiring about grace to prayer for grace instead of word and sacrament. Lutheran pietists, even

899) Matt. 6:7

900) *Examen, De poenitentia*, p. 370.

also a Fresenius, have done the same.⁹⁰¹⁾ Underlying this practice, consciously or unconsciously, is always the denial of the general perfect reconciliation of the whole world of sinners through Christ's

901) Cf. Walther's account of his own sad experiences based on Fresenius' "Confession and Communion Book" in "The Proper Distinction of Law and Gospel" (39 Evening Lectures, edited from Walther's estate; 1897, p. 118 ff.). [Ed. — See [here](#), 15th Evening Lecture beginning with "Let me illustrate this by the example of Dr. John Philip Pastor Fresenius..."; Law & Gospel: p. 156 ff]. Fresenius' first rule to a "thorough" conversion "in a short time" is also, "Pray for grace!" "There one goes into his closet, as the Savior addresses the counsel Matt. 6:6, or where else he can talk with God alone, bows his knees before Him, and cries out with all his might for grace, and not only for grace that God may forgive sins, but also for grace that He may truly change the heart and destroy the love of sin in it." "This prayer one does not do once or twice, but one continues daily groaning, praying, calling out, and crying out, until one obtains the grace of being assured by one's own experience of the true change of heart." To this Walther counters the thesis: "God's Word is not rightly shared when sinners, stricken and terrified by the law, instead of being directed to Word and Sacrament, are instructed to gain the object by praying and struggling, namely, to pray and struggle so long." Walther first takes three examples from apostolic practice to show that terrified sinners were pointed to the word of the gospel and baptism, Acts 2:16, 22. Then he shows that three errors underlie the contrary practice of the Reformed sects and the Reformed-practicing Lutherans: 1. They do not believe and teach a real, complete reconciliation of man to God through Christ's substitutionary satisfaction. 2. they teach falsely of the doctrines of the gospel. They do not take the gospel to be a proclamation of the forgiveness of sins, but a guide to human endeavors to acquire God's grace. Individual sect preachers are a partial exception because they are Lutheran-influenced. 3. The sects teach false doctrines of faith. They regard faith, by which men are justified and saved, as a quality in man. "The doctrine of infused grace is the whole secret of the papacy and the sects." Walther, however, does not fail to point out that even such Lutherans as profess the right doctrine all too often practice Romanism and enthusiasm, because every man, according to his natural nature, "does not want to place his redemption in anything apart from, but in himself alone." (The Lutheran Lehre von der Rechtfertigung, Ein Referat etc., p. 64.; [Ed.- p. 64 must be in [1859 edition](#), in [1880 edition it is page 81](#); in [1859 Western District "Referat" it is pages 56-57](#)) Concerning the nature of the newer theology Walther says a. a. O., p. 69 [Ed.- p. p. 69 must be in [1859 edition](#), in [1880 edition it is page 87](#); in [1859 Western District "Referat" it is page 60](#)]: "The whole of the newer Christianity does not want to believe God on His mere Word — wants to believe only when one feels the grace in oneself and thinks to be able to be certain of it through oneself. (Foundation of faith on the reborn I, the Christian consciousness). In fact, this means nothing other than suffering shipwreck in faith..... One wants to search for Christ only in oneself and not be satisfied until one supposedly finds him there. One is wont to ask: Do you have Christ in your heart? Do you feel him working in it? If the answer is: "Yes," then there should be comfort and hope, then one wants to believe. But what one takes for faith in this way is not faith, but a pure deception or, in the best case, a fruit of faith."

satisfactio vicaria and the denial of the truth that Word and Sacrament are the divinely ordained means by which God both offers the forgiveness of sins already present through Christ and produces and strengthens faith. — We should also add a few words here about modern "experiential theology." The "experience theologians", like their whole theology, want to base prayer on "experience". W. Herrmann says quite correctly⁹⁰²⁾ that the right prayer must not be a "cry of distress penetrating into the unknown", but a "real address to God". He further says quite correctly that man can only address the God who has revealed himself to him. But now it stands in question what kind of revelation must be made that actually produces in man the confidence to "address" God for forgiveness of sins. It is not enough, as Herrmann thinks, that we recall an experience through which God perceptibly intervened in our lives and thus sensitively presented Himself to us as "present." Every man already has the revelation of God's presence in his inner being, in nature and in history.⁹⁰³⁾ But this revelation gives man so little courage to ask God for forgiveness of sins that it rather suggests to him to flee from God, because man is oppressed by his feeling of guilt before God. This feeling of guilt, however, does not give way to any human activity, whether this activity consists in the "tension of one's own spiritual power" or in humanly conceived services and sacrifices. For the prayer for remission of guilt, therefore, the memory of an intervention in our life is not sufficient, but here the memory of the great event in the life of Christ is necessary, which concerns the whole world and therefore also every human individual, namely the memory of the event that God was in Christ and reconciled the world to Himself, and that God has established among us the Word of reconciliation, so that we may believe it. Any appeal to God for remission of sins that sets aside Christi *satisfactorio vicaria* and the means of grace is not a prayer in the sense of the fifth petition, but is based on self-deception. If there is a real recognition of sin, then the self-deception is also recognized as such.

Woe to him who trusts in it! For to do so is to make a false Christ for oneself, and to reject the Christ who hung on the cross and gives Himself to us in the Gospel.

902) RE. ³ VI, 386 ff. Cf. by the same author "Intercourse of Christians with God".

903) Acts 17:24-28.

Law and Gospel. ^

(*De discrimine legis et evangelii.*)

Since the content of Scripture is divided into Law and Gospel, it cannot be otherwise than that a doctrinal exposition corresponding to Scripture deals throughout with Law and Gospel and their relationship to each other. Already in the introduction it had to be explained in the description of the Christian religion in its difference from the pagan religions that the Christian religion is gospel religion, while all non-Christian religions bear the character of law religion. In describing theology as the fitness for the public doctrinal office in the church (ἡ ἱκανότης ἡ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, *facultas docendi*), it was shown that the theological habitus also included the fitness to recognize and teach law and gospel both in their unity and in their diversity. In the doctrine of God (*De Deo*), a distinction was made between the natural and the Christian concept of God, showing that the triune God revealed in Scripture is the God who is gracious to sinners or the God of the Gospel, while the natural concept of God does not go beyond the Law and therefore may well lead to an evil conscience, but not to a good one. Because sin is non-conformity with the divine law (ἀνομία), in the doctrine of sin (*De peccato*) it was necessary to set forth what the divine law was that obligates all men at all times and in all places. In the doctrine of grace (*De gratia Dei salvifica*) it had to be explained that the saving grace is *favor Dei propter Christ*, which proclaims the gospel, and stands in exclusive opposition to the iusitia inhaerens vel vitae, which the law demands. The doctrine of the acquisition of grace through Christ (*De opere Christi*) sums up that Christ took the place of men under the duty and punishment of the law given to men. In the doctrine of the appropriation of grace (*De gratia Spiritus Sancti applicatrice*), the law was eliminated as a means of grace, and it was shown that only the gospel is a means of grace, because it both presents the forgiveness of sins acquired from Christ and, through such presentation, works and strengthens faith. The conversion (*conversio*)

of man before God consists in the conversion of man from the law, namely from his innate *opinio legis*, to the Gospel. The Christian doctrine of man's justification before God (*De hominis iustificatione coram Deo*) is taught correctly only when the *particulis exclusivis* are held to, that is, everything is carefully separated out that belongs to the realm of the law and the works of the law. Also in the doctrine of sanctification and good works (*De sanctificatione et bonis operibus*) it had to be emphasized that not the law, but only the gospel works sanctification and good works. Therefore, if in the following we deal with "Law and Gospel" under a special section, this can only be a compilation of what was said earlier. But this compilation is very necessary and useful in our time. While the old Lutheran theologians take a very detailed look at *De lege et evangelio* or *De discrimine legis et evangelii*, this chapter is either completely missing in more recent doctrinal presentations, or it is only mentioned in passing. Frank, among the newer theologians, has also drawn attention to this. He says:⁹⁰⁴⁾ "Not easily has a doctrine in our Evangelical church been more steadily recorded, theoretically worked on, and practically applied than the doctrine of Law and Gospel. It was so essentially connected with Luther's way of life, with the basic doctrine of the Evangelical Church of justification by grace through faith, with the shaping of the confession, which in the [5th article of the Formula of Concord](#) drew the result from the doctrinal controversy with Agricola and the later controversies of that kind, that one cannot well imagine a continuity of the *publica doctrina* without this point of doctrine. In the teaching of the catechism, the relationship between the first and the second main part leads again and again to the inculcation of the difference and the connection between the law and the gospel. It is characteristic of the present situation that this part of the Evangelical paradox is also considered unsuitable and contrary to the right Evangelical knowledge. ... That man in himself stands in a legal relationship to God, with the consequent order: Do this, and you shall live; and that grace and the gospel are certain from God to the transgressors of this law, is denied. ... For this reason

904) [Dogmatic Studies. Erl. and Leipzig, 1892, pp. 104 ff.](#)

it might be time to draw attention to this point, which is especially close to the practical theologians, to the guidance of the soul of every Evangelical Christian". The fact that newer theologians do not know what to do with the article of doctrine of law and gospel, especially do not know the difference between law and gospel, is due to the fact that they have given up the *satisfactio vicaria* and thus necessarily fall from the gospel to the law, even if they use the word "gospel" abundantly, and even think that they have grasped the meaning of the gospel more deeply than in earlier times.

What we would like to say about the law and the gospel and their relationship to each other, we put together under the following sections: 1. The concepts of law and gospel. 2. Law and gospel in their juxtaposition, or what is common to both. 3. Law and gospel in their opposition, or wherein they are opposites. 4. Law and gospel in their relation to each other, or wherein they are practically to be bound together. 5. The difficulty of distinguishing law and gospel; 6. The importance of this distinction. 7. The deniers of the difference between law and gospel.

1. The concepts of law and gospel. [△]

We distinguish law and gospel from each other when both are used in the proper sense. The law in the proper sense (*lex proprie accepta*) is the Word of God, in which God demands of men that they conform in their nature and in their thoughts, words and works to His commandments, which He has given to men as a rule of life, and pronounces the curse on the transgressors.⁹⁰⁵⁾ The Gospel in the proper sense (*evangelium proprie acceptum*) is the Word of God, in which God makes no moral demands on men at all, and therefore does not rebuke transgressions but

905) The definition of the Formula of Concord: "The Law is actually a divine doctrine, in which the just, unchanging will of God is revealed, as man should be in his nature, thoughts, words and works, that he may be pleasing and acceptable to God, and threatens the transgressors thereof with God's wrath, temporal and eternal punishment." (636, 17. [[Trigl. 957](#), [Sol. Decl., V, 17](#) [🔗](#)]) More briefly in the Epitome: "The law is actually a divine doctrine, which teaches what is right and pleasing to God, and rebukes everything that is sinful and contrary to God's will." (534, 2. [[Trigl. 801](#), [Epit., V, 5](#) [🔗](#)])

on the contrary, promises God's grace to those who have not kept God's law for the sake of Christ's vicarious satisfaction.⁹⁰⁶⁾

"Law" is used in the Scriptures in the proper sense, where it is said that the law is not based on faith, but requires perfect action on the part of man,⁹⁰⁷⁾ pronounces the curse on the transgressors,⁹⁰⁸⁾ shuts the mouth of all the world⁹⁰⁹⁾ and thus imparts knowledge of sin.⁹¹⁰⁾

"Gospel" is used in Scripture in its proper sense, where it is said that the gospel is not based on works but on faith?") therefore does not punish sinners, but promises them grace,⁹¹²⁾ peace,⁹¹³⁾ salvation.⁹¹⁴⁾

Besides, the word "law" is also used in a broader or general sense, so that it denotes divine revelation in general, and then specifically also divine revelation κατ' ἐξοχήν, namely, the Gospel. Thus Is. 2:3. "From Zion will go forth the law (תּוֹרָה [HEBREW])."⁹¹⁵⁾ The word "gospel" is also used to designate the whole Christian doctrine. But this is done in such a way that the whole,

906) The definition of the Formula of Concord: "The gospel is actually such a doctrine, which teaches what a man should believe who has not kept the law and is condemned by it, namely, that Christ has atoned for and paid for all sin and has obtained and acquired for him, without all his merit, forgiveness of sins, righteousness that is valid before God, and eternal life." (534, 5. [[Trigl. 801](#), [Epit., V, 5](#) [🔗](#)]) Luther: "The gospel is such a doctrine or Word of God, which neither requires our works nor commands us to do anything, but calls us to simply accept the offered grace of forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation and to let it be given to us." ([IX. 803](#))

907) Gal. 3:12.

908) Gal. 3:10.

909) Rom. 3:19.

910) Rom. 3:20.

911) Rom. 1:16. 17.

912) Acts 20:21.

913) Rom. 10:15;

Eph. 6:15

914) Eph. 1:13.

915) That תּוֹרָה [HEBREW] stands here for gospel cannot be doubted, because it denotes the Word of God, by which the heathen are gathered into the Christian church. Luther: That the law proceeds from Zion "is the cause of the increase of the church and the extension of the kingdom of Christ, namely the sermon of the gospel. For he here promises a new word ... since he adds: 'from Zion,' as if to say, 'Before I gave the law on Mount Sinai, now I will give another on Mount Zion, which will not be a doctrine of works, but of faith, not of laws, but of grace, not accusing, but communicating the forgiveness of sins,' [conferens remissionem peccatorum](#)." ([St. L. VI, 35](#); Erl., lat., XXII, 42 sq.)

which is to be taught in the Church and by the Church, is named after the most excellent part. Denominatio fit a parte potiori.⁹¹⁶⁾ So it is said Mark. 1:1 of the Gospel of Mark, which also contains the sermon of repentance of the Baptist (v. 4 ff.): "This is the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ," ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

The use of the word "gospel" in the broader and in the proper or narrower sense is also indicated by the Formula of Concord. A dispute arose over the question of whether the gospel could also be called a sermon of repentance and punishment, and especially whether the gospel could be said to rebuke the sin of unbelief. The Formula of Concord answers the question in the affirmative when the word gospel is used in the broader sense (late), and in the negative when it is used in the proper sense (proprie). The Formula of Concord says:⁹¹⁷⁾ "Therefore, since we consider this controversy" (whether the Gospel is to be called a sermon of repentance), "such [controversy] has been caused primarily by the fact that the little word 'Gospel' has not been used and understood in one and the same sense everywhere, but in two different ways in Holy Scriptures as well as by the old and new church teachers. For once (uno modo) it is used that by it is understood the whole doctrine of Christ our Lord, which He led on earth in His Ministry and commanded to be led in the New Testament, and thus understood by it the explanation of the Law and the proclamation of grace and mercy, as Mark. 1 stands written: 'This is the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God'. And soon after that the summary main parts are set: Repentance and forgiveness of sins." This is the description of the word "gospel" "when used in a broad sense and outside the proper distinction of law and gospel." In this "wide sense," the gospel can be called a sermon of repentance. "After this, the word 'gospel' is used in another, viz.

916) L. u. W. 1887, p. 318. Likewise Gerhard, *Locus de cr.*, § 6: *Monendum haud incommode synecdochen statui in illis pronuntiatis* [as Mark 16:15], *quae totum docendi ministerium evangelii appellatione expriment, ut ex parte digniori et potiori totum intelligatur*. [Google]

917) 633, 3 ff. [Trigl. 953, Sol. Decl., V, 3 f. . 

in its proper sense, since it does not understand the sermon of repentance, but only the sermon of the grace of God, as follows immediately after Mark. 1:15, where Christ says: 'Repent and believe the gospel.'" ⁹¹⁸⁾

2. Law and gospel in their juxtaposition, or what is common to law and gospel. ^

Law and Gospel are first of all both the Word of God. The words of the law: "Thou shalt love God thy Lord with all thy heart" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" together with the sentence of condemnation: "Cursed be every man that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, that he should do them. — These words of the law are the Word of God and the will of God, as well as the word of the gospel, with which Paul and Silas saved the jailer of Philippi from despair: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. Furthermore: Both, law and gospel, concern all men. As the word of the law, "Ye shall be holy, for I am holy," binds the king as well as the beggar, the cultured man as well as the savage, so there is no man in the world whom the word of the gospel does not concern, which absolves all men from the guilt of sin and condemnation. Finally: Both, law and gospel, are to be taught side by side in the church and by the church until the Last Day.⁹¹⁹⁾ The fact that this also applies to the Law is against

918) Quenstedt makes II. 1027 the remark: *In Scripturis evangelio quidem assignatur saepius nomen legis, nunquam vero legi tribuitur appellatio evangelii*. [[Google](#)] — Baier says [III, 342](#) about the different use of the words law and gospel: *Aliquando latius accipiuntur voces, ita ut lex sub suo conceptu evangelium et hoe illam quodammodo complectatur, v. g. quando lex sumitur pro tota Scriptura, Fs. 1, 2, aut specialius pro Scriptura Veteris Testamenti, Ioh. 15:25; 1 Cor. 14:21, denique peculiariter pro scriptis Mosaicis, Lue. 24:44. evangelium quoque interdum latius accipitur pro tota doctrina Novi Testamenti a Christo et apostolis tradita, Marc. 1:14; 16:15; Luc. D, 6. Hic autem accipiuntur vocabula legis et evangelii, quatenus sibi adaequate contradistinguuntur... [[Google](#)] Gerhard on different meanings of the words law and gospel: *L. de lege*, § 3; *L. de evang.*, § 6.*

919) Thus, Paul teaches both side by side in the Epistle to the Romans, first very extensively Law (chap. 1:18-3:20) and then very extensively Gospel (chap. 3:21 ff.). The Formula of Concord still reminds (638, 23 [[Trigl. 959, Sol. Decl. V, 23](#) [☞](#)]): "These two sermons have from the beginning of the world been practiced side by side in the church of God ever and always with due distinction."

Antinomianism, which tried to penetrate the Lutheran Church at the time of the Reformation through Agricola and his followers.⁹²⁰⁾ Antinomism is based on the idea that the knowledge of sin is not to be taught from the law but from the gospel, and that therefore the law does not belong to the church but to the territory of the state, "to the town hall".⁹²¹⁾ The Lutheran Church rejects this error on all sides in the 5th and 6th articles of the Formula of Concord.

920) Johann Agricola, born in Eisleben in 1492, pastor at the Nikolai Church in Eisleben in 1525, in Wittenberg in 1536, court preacher in Berlin in 1540, died in 1566. — In the Majorist controversy about the necessity of good works, antinomian propositions were represented by the pastors Andreas Poach of Erfurt and Anton Otto of Nordhausen.

921) Some main propositions of Agricola and his followers are: "Repentance is not to be taught from the Decalogue or any law of Moses, but from the wounding of the Son of God (*ex violatione Filii*) by the Gospel." "Christ says in John that it is not the law but the Spirit that rebuke sin." "Any thing without which the Holy Spirit is given, and men are justified, need not be taught, neither the beginning, nor the means, nor the end of justification." "Those who teach that the law must be preached first, then the gospel, pervert the words of Christ." "The gospel teaches the wrath of God from heaven and at the same time the righteousness that is justified before God, Rom. 1." "The law is not worthy to be called the Word of God." "The Decalog belongs in the council chamber, not in the preaching chair." — Agricola first (1527) attacked Melanchthon's articles of visitation, and ten years later (1537) also banned Luther. He says against Melanchthon: "In the Saxon visitation [*is impure*]: Because Christ commands that repentance and forgiveness of sins be preached in His name, the Decalog is to be taught." Agricola also opposes Luther in the *Nominalenchenchus*: "In the Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, Luther says that it is the proper office of the law to afflict and terrify the conscience, so that it may the more easily recognize Christ. Such passages are many in the same commentary, which we reject as erroneous, so that the purity of the doctrine may be preserved." — Agricola's "Propositions Disseminated Among Brethren" (*Positiones inter fratres sparsae*) and other antinomian propositions established by him and his followers are reported in the St. Louis edition of Luther's works, XX, 1624 ff. Luther's six disputations against the antinomians are printed in loc. cit. 1628 ff. The Latin text is found in Erl., Opp. V. a. IV, 424 sqq. Also included here are Luther's writing "Wider die Antinomer" (1539) and "Luthers Bericht von M. Joh. Eislebens falscher Lehre und schändlichen Tat" (1540). St. L. XX, 1610 ff. and 1649 ff. The sermon on the 5th Sunday after Trinity in the Gospel Postil also offers a clear confrontation with Agricola's antinomianism, XI, 1328 ff. From Schlüsselburg's *Catalogus*, vol. IV belongs here. Sufficient material to assess the dispute is also found in Gieseler, III, 2, 137 ff. Schmid-Hauck, Dogmengesch.,⁴, pp. 360 ff.

It cannot be said that anything — either from the theological point of view, or from the natural-reasonable point of view — can be said in favor of the position of Agricola and his followers. They did not want to have the law taught in the Christian Church. But what they wanted to dismiss, they kept under another name. They inserted the law into the gospel. But in doing so, as Luther crudely puts it, they wring the neck of the apostle Paul and put the foremost thing at the back. They made the wrath of God an appendix of the gospel. Luther describes the logical and theological lack of understanding of the antinomians quite accurately when he says:⁹²²⁾ "They want to do away with the law and yet teach wrath, which alone the law must do. So they do nothing more, for throw away these poor letters 'L-a-w,' but confirm the wrath of God, which is interpreted and understood by these letters, without wanting to wring St. Paul's neck and put the foremost at the back." "They have devised for them a new method, that one should first address grace, then revelation of wrath, so that the word 'law' may not be heard nor spoken. This is a cat's paw, they like it very well and think they want to pull the whole scripture in and out and become lux mundi with it. This is what they say St. Paul must give in Rom. 1. But they do not see how St. Paul teaches "just contrary", beginning and showing first the wrath of God from heaven, making all the world sinners and guilty before God; then, when they have become sinners, he teaches them how to obtain grace and become righteous, as the first three chapters show powerfully and clearly. And is this also a strange blindness and foolishness, that they think that revelation of wrath is something other than the law, which is not possible; for revelation of wrath is the law where it is known and felt, as Paul says: Lex iram operatur. Have they not then done well to put away the law, and yet teach it, when they teach the doctrine of wrath? But turn back the shoe, and teach us the law according to the gospel, and wrath according to grace." Equally incomprehensible is Agricola's argument that the law is therefore not to be taught because it does not

922) Against the Antinomians, XX, 1618 f.

convey justification.⁹²³⁾ The argument is to be reversed and to say that because the law does not impart justification but teaches condemnation, it is to be preached before the gospel, so that through the gospel the condemnation proclaimed by the law may be annulled. Justification has condemnation by the law as its prerequisite. Luther therefore countered Agricola: "Is this not blindness upon blindness, that he does not want to preach the law without and before the gospel? Surely these are *impossibilia*. How is it possible to preach about the forgiveness of sins when there are no sins beforehand? How is it possible to preach life, where there is not first death?" "For grace shall war and prevail in us against the law and sin, that we despair not." ⁹²⁴⁾ Luther, therefore, does not go too far when he says that Agricola, with his fight against the sermon of the law, consequently also abolishes the gospel, Christ as the fulfiller of the law, and thus the whole of Christianity. Furthermore: Agricola does not want to have taught repentance from the law, but from the doctrine of the gospel, because only from the gospel can repentance come out of love for God, which is certainly correct. But when he now says about repentance coming from love for God: this is "the first stage of the new birth, the right breathing and blowing of the Holy Spirit. After that it gains a hearty trust in God, he will credit it with its folly": ⁹²⁵⁾, he thus bases trust in God or faith in the forgiveness of sins on repentance arising from love for God, that is, on regeneration and sanctification. With his new "Methodus" he does not save the doctrine of justification, but he turns into Roman ways. If we add that Agricola, with his logical and theological ambiguity, presented himself as the savior of the purity of Christian doctrine ⁹²⁶⁾ and rejected the teachings of the Wittenbergers and especially of Luther as erroneous,

923) *Positiones inter fratres sparsae* 6-9. [St. L. XX, 1625](#).

924) [St. L. XX, 1659, 1656](#).

925) Kurze Summarien, p. 304: in [Schmid-Hauck, p. 361](#). Agricola's "Kurze Summarien" appeared in 1537, but were suppressed because they were published without censorship. G. Plitt, RE.² I, 452.

926) *Positiones etc.*. 13: "That the Christian doctrine may be preserved pure, it is necessary to resist those who teach that the gospel is to be preached only to those whose hearts have been previously frightened and crushed by the law."

then we understand that Luther sometimes used very sharp language against Agricola and counted his appearance among the "storm winds" by which the devil ever sought to extinguish the light of the gospel that had risen.⁹²⁷⁾ More details of Antinomianism are considered in the following exposition.

3. Law and gospel in their opposition or as opposites. ^

There is no need to apologize for Luther, much less to say that Luther spoke in a misleading way,⁹²⁸⁾ when he describes law and gospel as complete opposites. Luther, however, speaks very decisively at this point. He says of the law and gospel that they are "separated from each other in the widest sense and are more than opposites" (*inter se longissime "distincta et plus quam contradictoria separata sunt*).⁹²⁹⁾ But Luther is absolutely right, the law and the gospel are really complete opposites according to their content; they relate to each other like yes and no. Whereas the law demands from man complete conformity to the commandments it lays down for man's nature and actions, and proclaims God's wrath on all delinquents, the gospel makes no moral demands on man whatsoever, and therefore does not punish any transgressions — not even the sin of unbelief⁹³⁰⁾ — but rather assures all transgressors and those condemned by the law, without any good quality or works on their part, of God's grace for Christ's sake. It is to be noted,

927) Against the Antinomians, [XX, 1619-1623](#). — A short biography of Agricola and an apt description of his character can be found in RE.² I, 211 by Gustav Plitt. There the actual motive of his stand against Melanchthon is also pointed out. Agricola "was a gifted and not unskilled man. ... But everything good was spoiled by his intemperate vanity. Luther, who knew him well, wrote on December 6, 1540: *Si velis scire, quidnam ipsa vanitas sit, nulla certiore imagine cognosces quam Islebii*. This defect of character made him unfit to be a minister. Agricola belongs to those assistants of the reformers who did more harm than good." The letter mentioned by Plitt is addressed to Jakob Stratner, court preacher in Berlin, and is found in de Wette V, 319 f.; in the [St. L. Ausg. XXIb, 2535 ff.](#)

928) Against Thomasius, [Das Bekenntnis der ev.-luth. K. in der Konsequenz s. Prinzipips, p. 47 f.](#) Likewise in *Dogmengeschichte* 2 11, 425.

929) *Ad Gal.* II. 105: [St. L. IX, 447](#).

930) The gospel certainly demands faith, but does not rebuke unbelief. More about this point at the end of this section.

what a synergistic theology has forgotten, that the same persons whom the law pronounces guilty and condemns to death are absolved from guilt and condemnation in the gospel. The Gospel, as far as its promise of grace is concerned, knows no distinction between great and small sinners, between those who have behaved rightly and those who have not, between those who are more or less guilty, and so on. Rather, it says, "There is no distinction here; they are all sinners, and lack the glory which they ought to have in God, and are justified without merit by his grace through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ."⁹³¹⁾ It is already a falsification of the gospel by the addition of law, if the grace promised by the gospel is referred to other and differently constituted, relatively better or less guilty persons than those about whom the condemnation judgment of the law passes. Of course, the gospel demands faith. That the gospel demands faith is an expression of Scripture,⁹³²⁾ therefore not to be criticized. But the faith which the gospel demands is not a good quality in man or a human achievement in any sense, but the very opposite of all achievement on the part of man, because according to Scripture the "by faith" (διὰ τῆς πίστεως) is as much as "not of works" (οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων).⁹³³⁾ That God requires or commands faith in the gospel has the sense that God is fully serious about the offer of grace in the gospel.⁹³⁴⁾ Then it stands that the gospel itself produces the faith it demands without man's cooperation. The faith which the gospel demands or commands is, as Luther says, not a "work commanded" in the law, as love, obedience, etc. are commanded in the law, but faith is an effect of the promise (*opus promissionis*). Indeed, by requiring or commanding faith, the Gospel itself speaks faith into the heart, as the jailer at Philippi becomes faithful through the apostle Paul's imperative: "Believe (πίστευσον) on the Lord JEsu(m) Christ."⁹³⁵⁾ In order to put into the light and to hold the complete difference of the law and the gospel according to their contents, the ancient theologians continued to point out the different nature of the promises of the law and of the gospel

931) Rom. 3:23-24.

932) 1 Joh. 3:23.

933) Eph. 2:8-9.

934) Cf. further explanation [II, 528](#).

935) E. A. 58, 353 f.

and called the promises of the law conditional (*promissiones conditionales*) and those of the gospel pure promises of grace (*promissiones gratuita*). We must, what some antinomians denied,⁹³⁶⁾ on the basis of the Scriptures, of course, also speak of promises of the law, because the law promises life to those who really keep it. Gal. 3:12: "The man that doeth it shall live thereby," ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς. But if we compare the promises of the law with those of the gospel as to their nature, they are complete contrasts. The Scriptures are very careful to point out that the Law promises life only to those men who have actually kept the Law in all matters, as is already evident from the Scriptural words just quoted. Then, in order to characterize the promises of the Law, it is necessary to recall with what emphasis Christ points out to those who wanted to inherit eternal life by the way of the Law: "Do this and you will live."⁹³⁷⁾ If, on the other hand, we pay attention to how the promises of the Gospel are described in Scripture, we get the impression that Scripture cannot do enough in testifying to the fact that the Gospel promises righteousness and life to men who have not kept the Law. It heaps the *particulae exclusivae*: "without law", "without the works of the law", "not of works", "not of the works of the law".⁹³⁸⁾ In other words, the promises of the law and the promises of the gospel are related in this way: the law justifies the man who is righteous in himself; the gospel justifies the man who is ungodly in himself. The Scripture explicitly says that faith in the gospel is faith which believes in the God who righteousnesses (τον ἀσεβή) the ungodly.⁹³⁹⁾ — Again, for the sake of completeness, it must be remembered that the word "condition" is ambiguous. One cannot forbid the expression "conditional promise" to describe the promises of the gospel, because also the gospel promises are expressed in sentences that are conditional sentences according to the

936) Andreas Poach of Erfurt and Anton Otto of Nordhausen argued that the Law had no promise of salvation at all. Schlüsselbnrg, *Catalogus* IV, 276; [Schmid-Hauck, p. 363](#).

937) Luke 10:28.

938) Rom. 3:21, 28; Eph. 2:9; Gal. 2:16.

939) Rom. 4:5.

grammatical form, Rom. 10:9: εὐν πιστευσής ... σωθήσῃ ["If thou ... shalt believe in thine heart... thou shalt be saved."]). But the teachers who understand and hold the distinction between law and gospel remind us that "condition" in conditional sentences belonging to the law does, however, denote a human accomplishment, as in the sentence, "If you keep the law, you will live." But in conditional sentences that belong in the Gospel, as in the sentence, "If thou believest, thou shalt be saved," faith does not denote an achievement or a work, but the manner of appropriation (*modum applicationis*). The sentence: "If you believe, you will be saved" does not have the meaning: "If you have faith, you will be saved", but: on the way of faith, without own goodness and achievements, you will be saved.⁹⁴⁰⁾ Quenstedt treats the question: An promissiones evangelicae sint conditionales under a special section.⁹⁴¹⁾

If we have to hold the law and the gospel, seen from their content, with Luther as *contradictoria*, an insurmountable difficulty seems to arise. If in the Law God condemns sinners to death because of their sins, and in the Gospel he absolves the same sinners — for there is no difference among them — and grants them life, it seems to follow that neither the hearer of the Word of God knows whether he should apply the Word of death or the Word of life to himself, nor even the pastor is able to know whether in applying the Word to certain persons he should say to them: "Thou art a child of death" or, "Thou shalt not die, but live, for the Lord hath taken away thy sin." In order to remove this apparent confusion, one has always resorted to the information that the consolation of the Gospel should be preached only to those who have already become different and better men. We have already recognized this information as erroneous. The apparent confusion is only lifted in the right way if we let ourselves be instructed from the Scriptures about another difference between law and gospel. It is this, that both have their different areas, sharply delineated against each other, in which they are to come into effect within the order of salvation (οικονομία). The law, to be sure, is to be proclaimed without any deduction,⁹⁴²⁾ but only for the purpose of being applied

940) Cf. the quotations from Heerbrand, Sebastian Schmidt, Gerhard II, 37, note 97.

941) *Systema* II, 1018 sqq.

942) Matt. 5:17. 18; Gal. 3:10; Rom. 1:18; 3:9-19.

to bring man to the knowledge of his sin and worthiness of damnation. As soon as this purpose is achieved, that is, as soon as the man asks with a shattered heart, "What must I do to be saved?" then the law is to be silenced. It is not a church order, but a divine order, that not the law, but only the gospel be preached to terrified hearts, promising forgiveness of sins and salvation without law and works to sinners as they are ("Just as I am") for Christ's sake. In the catechisms this is expressed something like this: "The law is to be preached to sure sinners, the gospel to poor sinners." In the scriptural words of Rom. 10:4: "Christ is the end of the law; he that believeth on him is righteous," the territory of the law is precisely delineated against the territory of the gospel, and the exclusive right of the gospel in the territory of broken and humbled hearts is expressed in the purpose of the gospel: "to preach the gospel to the poor, binding up the brokenhearted."⁹⁴³⁾ This boundary regulation between law and gospel stands firm from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, especially also from the practice of Christ and the apostles.⁹⁴⁴⁾ Luther:⁹⁴⁵⁾ "The law has its goal, how far it should go and what it should accomplish, namely up to Christ, to frighten the impenitent with God's wrath and disgrace. Likewise, the gospel has its special office and work, to preach forgiveness of sins to the afflicted conscience. ... Wherefore the conscience is rightly stricken, that it feels sin rightly, is in distress of death, is burdened with war, pestilence, poverty, shame, and such like calamities, and as the law saith: You are condemned to death, this and that I demand of you, you have not done nor been able to do — where the law, I say, thus strikes in and terrifies man with fear of death and hell and despair, then it is high time to know how to separate law and gospel from each other and to direct each to its place. Here let him separate who can separate, for here is the time of separation and need. Here belongs that St. Paul says: "Before faith came,

943) Is. 61:1; Luke 4:18.

944) Nathan and David, 2 Sam. 12:13. Christ and the sinner, Luke 7:48. Peter on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:37-39. Paul and Silas and the jailer of Philippi, Acts 16:27-31. the congregation at Corinth and the incestuous man, 1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Cor. 2:6-8.

945) Sermon on Gal. 3:23-24, "On the Difference between the Law and the Gospel". [St. L. IX, 798 ff.](#)

we are kept and shut up under the law.' ... Therefore, if the law accuses me of not having done this and that, of being unrighteous and written in God's register of guilt, I must confess it is all true. But the corollary: Therefore you are condemned, I must not admit, but defend myself with strong faith and say: According to the law, which reckons my guilt, I am indeed a poor, condemned sinner, but I appeal from the law to the gospel, for God has given another word above the law, that is, the gospel, which gives us his grace, forgiveness of sins, eternal righteousness and life, and in addition absolves and absolves me from your terrors and condemnation, and comforts me that all guilt has been paid by the Son of God, Jesus Christ himself. Therefore, it is highly necessary that both words be rightly directed and acted upon, and that diligently care be taken that they not be blended together." To the right separation of law and gospel belongs therefore also that the gospel is recognized as the "higher word", whereby God wants to let it remain towards the frightened sinner. Luther adds: "If now both, law and gospel, collide, and the law finds me a sinner, accuses and condemns me, but the gospel says, Matt. 9:2: 'Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee? thou shalt be saved: both are the Word of God; but which shall I follow? This is what St. Paul teaches you: "When faith comes," he says, "we are no longer under the disciplinarian," then the law ceases. For it should and must, as the lesser word, give place and room to the gospel. Both are the Word of God, the Law and the Gospel, but they are not both equal. One is lower, the other higher; one weaker, the other stronger; one lower, the other greater. So when they wrestle with each other, I follow the gospel and say, "Good-bye, law!"⁹⁴⁶⁾

In order to explain the difference between the law and the gospel, it is necessary to point out their different sources of knowledge. While the law is still known to man by nature, no thought of the gospel has ever entered the heart of even

946) That these ways of speaking of Luther of the "lower" and "higher" word, which refer to the scope of the law and the gospel within the divine economy of salvation, find accordance with Scripture, is evident from Scripture passages such as Rom. 10:4; 5:20-21; 2 Cor. 3:7 ff; Deut. 18:15 ff; Jer. 31:31 ff; Hebr. 8:6-13.

the wisest and most civic-minded people.. The Gospel has become known among men only through God's revelation in the Word of God. The scripture also draws attention to this difference between law and gospel regarding their sources of knowledge. It says Rom. 2:14-15 of the law that the Gentiles, who do not have the written law, are law to themselves, because the work of the law, that is, what is commanded by the law, stands written in their hearts. Of the gospel, on the other hand, it says 1 Cor. 2:7 ff.: "Not a wisdom of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, which perish; but we speak of the secret, hidden wisdom of God (σοφίαν θεοῦ ἐν μυστηρίῳ, τὴν ἀποκρυπταμένην), which God ordained before the world for our glory, which none of the rulers of this world knew; for if they had known them, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, but, as it stands: That (α) eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into any man's heart (ἐπὶ καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἀνέβη), which God hath prepared for them that love him. But unto us God hath revealed it by his Spirit."⁹⁴⁷⁾ Therefore, all pagan religions, because they are all religions of law, do not bear the slightest resemblance to the Christian religion. It has become the custom of most of the newer representatives of the comparative study of religions to state a similarity, even an essential equality between the pagan religions and the Christian religion.⁹⁴⁸⁾ They come to this result in the way that they exclude the gospel of Christ, the crucified, as unessential from the Christian religion. For example, Pfeleiderer⁹⁴⁹⁾ and Frank B. Jevons.⁹⁵⁰⁾ The difference between law and gospel, seen on their sources of knowledge, actually also shapes itself into an opposition, insofar as the natural man asserts his innate religion of law against the gospel. He considers the gospel of God's grace in Christ to be an offence and foolishness,⁹⁵¹⁾ until the "*opinio legis*" in his heart is overcome by the gospel.⁹⁵²⁾

947) It has often been recalled that according to the context, these words do not refer to eternal salvation, but to the Gospel.

948) But Max Müller-Oxford [*sic*: **Monier Monier-Williams**] is quite different; see [II, 2, note 8](#).

949) *Religion and Religions*. 1906, p. 215 ff.

950) *An Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion*, 1908, p. 69.



951) 1 Cor. 1:23; 2:14. 952) Apol. 134, 144. [*Trigl.* 197, *Apol.*, 111,

In the question of how far law and gospel are opposites, the special question of whether the gospel or the law rebuks the sin of unbelief has also been dealt with. The Formula of Concord teaches, as has already been said, that the penalty of unbelief is to be assigned to the law, not to the gospel, if "gospel" is taken in its proper sense. Against this judgment it has been objected in ancient and modern times that it is impossible to see how the law can rebuke unbelief, since it knows nothing of faith. Therefore, the punishment of unbelief must be rebuke in the gospel. This, as Gerhard occasionally notes, was the main argument (*palmarium argumentum*) also of the later Philippists or Cryptocalvinists.^{952a)} Frank also finds the matter quite questionable.^{952b)} On the other hand, attention must be drawn to a twofold point: 1. After all that we know of the gospel in the proper sense from Scripture, one cannot even remotely entertain the thought that the gospel rebuke the sin of unbelief. 2. According to all that we know of the law from Scripture, the law truly cannot refrain from punishing the sin of unbelief along with all other sins. As for the first point, let us remember that there is a very close relationship between the gospel and the merit of Christ. The gospel distributes what Christ has earned. But Christ has purchased for all the world the forgiveness of all sins, that is, even the sin of unbelief. So also the gospel, as it distributes the forgiveness of all sins, so also the forgiveness of the sin of unbelief. How, then, should the gospel, which forgives the sin of unbelief, come to rebuks the sin of unbelief? We would therefore have to decide to deny Christ's merit and the essence of the gospel if we wanted to rebuke in the gospel, taken in its proper sense, the punishment of unbelief. Furthermore, if the gospel were to rebuke unbelief, it would also only condemn believers continually, because even

952 a) Gerhard points out to *L. de ev.*, § 105 that Agricola's theses of the Gospel as a penitential sermon were zealously defended by the Cryptocalvinists *ut apparet ex catechesi et thesibus anno 70. et 71. ibidem (namely in Wittenberg) editis*. Cf. Münscher, *Dogmengesch.* (Neudecker) III, 576

952 b) *Dogm. Studien*, p. 114: "The difficulty is this, that the reproving and punishing function of the law is, after all, only the reverse of its demanding and commanding one; the former, by the nature of the thing, cannot reach further than the latter."

in believers, besides faith, there is always a lot of unbelief, which truly weighs heavily on their conscience. Where, then, should we flee with the guilt of unbelief, which we must confess daily, if the gospel also punished the sin of unbelief instead of forgiving it? Even more, if the gospel were to rebuke unbelief, no man could come to believe the gospel at all, that is, become a Christian, because every man is unbelieving before he comes to believe. Therefore, we will have to agree with the Formula of Concord when it says: "Accordingly, we reject and consider it unjust and harmful when it is taught that the Gospel is actually (*proprie*) a sermon of repentance or punishment and not a sermon of grace alone, thereby turning the Gospel back into a doctrine of law, obscuring the merit of Christ and Holy Scriptures, depriving Christians of comfort, and opening the door again to popery."^{952c} And now the other point, how the Law comes to rebuke unbelief against the Gospel, since the Law, in itself or by itself, knows nothing of Gospel and faith. Here we have to remember that the Law and the Gospel do not float in the air as abstracts, but are both God's Word to man. The law is *Deus propter peccata damnans*, and the gospel is *Deus propter Christ absolvens sive iustificans*. Now why should not God also subject the contempt of His grace, that is, unbelief, to His penal operation as *Deus propter peccata damnans*? The Formula of Concord expresses the state of affairs thus:^{952d} "So (*hac ratione*) the law rebukes unbelief, if one does not believe God's Word. Since the Gospel, which alone actually teaches and commands believing in Christ, is God's Word, the Holy Spirit, through the ministry of the Law, also reproves unbelief, because they do not believe in Christ, which Gospel alone actually teaches saving faith in Christ." We know very well that this does not declare how the law and the gospel can be in God at the same time. This is connected with the fact that the knowledge of God in this life has the characteristic: ἀρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μέρους, "now I know it bit by bit".^{952e} — That the Gospel is a sermon of repentance and punishment has also been tried to prove by a reference to the

952c) Formula of Concord, p. 535, 11 [*Trigl.* 805, *Epit.*, V, 11 ]; 639, 27 [*961*, *Sol. Decl.*, V, 27 




952d) S. 637, 19. [*Trigl.* 957, *Sol. Decl.*, v, 19 ] 952e) 1 Cor. 13:12.

suffering and death of Christ. The train of thought was roughly this: Christ's suffering and death undoubtedly belongs in the gospel. Now, through Christ's suffering, sin is repented of, because from it we recognize the greatness of God's wrath and human guilt all the more. Consequently, the gospel is a sermon of repentance and punishment. To this it must be said: Admittedly, the wrath of God on the sin of men can and should also be taught from the suffering and death of Christ. Christ himself thus uses the fact of his suffering and death.^{952f)} But so far as this is done, not gospel but law is preached, when both words are used in their proper sense. This too is made clear in the Formula of Concord, when it says in Luther's words:^{952g)} "All the sermon of the law, the sermon of our sins and the sermon of God's wrath, be it as it how and when it may.. ... Yes, what is a more serious, more terrible display and sermon of God's wrath against sin than the suffering and death of Christ, His Son? But as long as all this preaches God's wrath and terrifies man, it is not the Gospel's nor Christ's own sermon, but Moses' and the law's on the impenitent. For the gospel and Christ are not ordained and given to terrify nor condemn, but to comfort and raise up those who are terrified and timid." In the *Epitome*, the fright with Christ's suffering and death is also called "a foreign office (*alienum opus*), by which he comes to his own office (*proprium suum officium*), that is, to preach grace."^{952h)}

4. Law and gospel in their binding together. ^

Law and gospel are not only to be strictly separated, but also to be bound together in practice in the closest possible way. Luther expresses this as follows: "Although these two are very far apart (*remotissima*) in content (*re ipsa*), they are at the same time bound together most closely in one and the same heart. Nothing is more closely bound than fear and confidence, law and gospel, sin and grace. For they are so bound that the one is absorbed (*absorbeatur*) by the other. Therefore, there can be

952f) Luke 23:27 ff. v. 31: "For if this be done in green wood, what shall become of dry?"

952g) 635, 12. 13. [[Trigl. 955f.](#), [Sol. Decl., V, 12](#) , 952h) 535, 10. [[Trigl. 803 V](#), 10 , 10 

no mathematical connection that would be equal to it." ⁹⁵³⁾ This close binding is already found in becoming a Christian or in conversion. Of course, conversion happens at the moment when faith in the Gospel shines in the heart.⁹⁵⁴⁾ But the forgiveness of sins offered in the Gospel is accepted by faith only by the man who has come to the realization of his damnability through the Law. Therefore, whoever would not preach the law would not allow the gospel or Christ in his work of redemption to take effect. This is what Luther did so thoroughly and in many different ways in his fight against antinomianism. Also objectively or according to the content, law and gospel refer to each other in such a way that the gospel offers and gives just what the law demands. The gospel, as is generally admitted, tells of Christ's work of redemption. But Christ's work of redemption consists in the fact that Christ, in the place of men, by his perfect obedience, fulfilled the law given to men⁹⁵⁵⁾ and bore the penalty for the transgression of it.⁹⁵⁶⁾ Therefore Luther rightly says that the antinomians with their demand to banish the sermon of the law from the church, as much as there is in them, also deprive the church of the gospel and Christ. Luther writes, "If the law is taken away, no one knows what Christ is, or what he did, since he fulfilled the law for us." Further, "What do you retain of Christ, if the law, which he fulfilled, is abolished, and you do not know what he fulfilled?" ⁹⁵⁷⁾ Further, "Where will you learn what Christ is, what he has done for us, where we are not to know what the law is, which he has fulfilled for us, or what sin is, for which he has done enough?" ⁹⁵⁸⁾ And if we look at the relation in which, in the heart of man, the effects of the law and the gospel stand to each other, we have the state of affairs that the gospel, with its judgment of justification, must overcome or "swallow up" the law, with its judgment of condemnation. "For grace" (which the

953) *Ad Gal.* Erl. (lat.) II, 113; St. L. IX, 454.

954) Acts 11:21; Col. 2:12 etc. 955) Gal. 4:4. 5; Matt. 5:17.

956) Gal. 3:13; Is. 53:4-6.

957) Fifth dispute, sentences 61. 67. XX, 1646.


958) *Wider die Antinomer*, XX, 1616. Second Disputation wider die Antinomer, XX, 1634, sentences 25. 26.

Gospel speaks) "shall war and prevail in us against the law and sin, that we despair not." ⁹⁵⁹⁾ Therefore Luther's judgment on Antinomianism is appropriate, "that the devil does not mean to take away the law by this 'spiritism', but Christ, the fulfiller of the law". ⁹⁶⁰⁾

But even after a man has become a Christian, the law and the gospel are still bound together in him, or, to be more precise, the law is still used in him, and therefore he cannot do without the sermon of the law. Of course, it should be noted that the Christian, in so far as he is a Christian or a new man, no longer needs the law. This is clear doctrine of Scripture: "No law is given to the righteousness, but to the unrighteous and disobedient, to the ungodly and sinners." ⁹⁶¹⁾ For the Christian according to the new man, the law is not merely partially, but completely superfluous in every usage it has. Without external law, according to the new man, he knows both what sin is and what good works are, and because, according to the new man, he is inwardly completely pious, he does not need the law to be kept in check outwardly by its threats and plagues. After all, according to the new man, the law is written in the heart of the Christian, ⁹⁶²⁾ just as the first men had God's law in their hearts through creation before the fall. ⁹⁶³⁾ The Formula of Concord also speaks this repeatedly and very clearly. It says: "Without all doctrine, admonition, stopping, or doing of the law," the Christians after the new man "do what they are obliged to do according to God's will; just as the sun, the moon, and the entire

⁹⁵⁹⁾ Luther [XX, 1656](#).

⁹⁶⁰⁾ Wider die Antinomer, [XX, 1614](#). [Chemnitz](#) says (*Loci, L. de iustificatione* II, 228) about the togetherness of law and gospel despite their difference: *Utrumque considerandum est, et differentia legis et evangelii et quod ita coniuncta sint lex et evangelium, ut nulla mathematica coniunctio dari possit, quae huic sit similis, sicut inquit Lutherus in 3. ad Galat. Consistit autem convenientia legis et evangelii in eo potissimum, quod beneficia Christi, de quibus evangelium concionatur, nihil aliud sunt quam satisfactio pro culpa et poena, quam nos legi debebamus, et iustitia legis perfectissima obedientia, et haec duo, quae lex requirit et flagitat, credentibus donantur et imputantur ad iustitiam. Nec intelligi potest magnitudo beneficiorum Christi, nisi hoc modo ad rigorem et severitatem legis exigatur.* [[Google Translated](#)]

⁹⁶¹⁾ 1 Tim. 1: 9. ⁹⁶²⁾ Jer. 31:33. ⁹⁶³⁾ Formula of Concord 640, 5. [[Trigl. 963, F. C., Sol. Del., VI, 5](#) 

heavenly bodies have their proper course unhindered for themselves, without admonition, stopping, driving, constraint, or coercion.⁹⁶⁴⁾ The Christian, however, as he exists *in concreto* in this life, is not a completely new man, but still carries the old one about him.⁹⁶⁴⁾ But the Christian, as he exists *in concreto* in this life, is not completely new man, but carries also still the old one at himself. And in this respect, after the old man, the Christian needs the law according to all the usages that the law has, no matter how one classifies or names these usages.⁹⁶⁵⁾ Therefore it is not a contradiction when Paul says on the one hand that no law is given to the Christians, on the other hand — Luther reminds⁹⁶⁶⁾ — already in the same chapter (v. 18) starts with commandments: "This commandment I command you" etc. This is not a contradiction because the Christian is considered once according to the new man and then again according to the old man still existing in him. Luther asks: "Are Paul and Timothy or the Christians not pious? Or what may Paul say: 'No law is given to the righteousness' and goes to and gives it himself?" Luther answers from this: "According to the spirit the believer is justified, without all sin, without any law; according to the flesh he still has sin. ... All kinds of filth are still clinging to him and evil desire, care for food, fear of death, avarice, anger, hatred; the filth always remains next to the faith, so that he may beat himself with it and fight it out. Since this is still the case, the Scriptures count us as unrighteous and sinners in that we must have as much law according to the flesh

964) A. a. O., 641, 6 [[Trigl. 965](#), [Sol. Decl.](#), [VI, 6](#) [🔗](#)]; 643, 17 [[967](#), [ibid.](#), [17](#) [🔗](#)]. Luther [IX, 879](#).

965) [Nitzsch-Stephan](#), [Dogmatik](#), p. 509: "According to the doctrine of the Formula of Concord, the old dogmatists also assert partly a threefold, partly even a fourfold *usus* of the law: 1. a *usus politicus seu civilis*, 2. a *usus elenchticus*, 3. a *usus paedagogicus*, 4. a *usus didacticus* or *normaticus*. [[Google](#)] Sometimes, however, nos. 2 and 3 are combined. Where they are distinguished, the characteristic feature of the *usus elenchticus* is: *peccati manifestatio et redargutio*, the characteristic feature of the *usus paedagogicus* is the *compulsus indirectus ad Christum* according to Gal. 3:23 f." There is no need to be frightened by either the tripartite or the quadripartite division, as long as the ideas thereby emphasized correspond to Scripture, which is really the case. If the *usus paedagogicus* is again distinguished from the *usus elenchticus*, this is justified by the fact that the law does not in itself lead to Christ, but only when Christ takes it into his hand. In itself, the law leads only to despair. The Holy Spirit must establish the right, intentional binding between law and gospel in the heart of man.


966) [St. L. IX, 880 f.](#)


as they." ⁹⁶⁷⁾ Luther also expresses it this way, "A Christian is in two realms at once. Inasmuch as he is flesh, he is under the law; inasmuch as he is spirit, he is under grace." ⁹⁶⁸⁾ Admittedly in such a way that in the struggle of the two against each other the time of grace or of the gospel retains the upper hand: "If thou art terrified by the law, say, Madam Law, thou art not alone; so thou art not all, but apart from thee there is still something greater and better, namely, grace, faith." But the victorious time of the Gospel always has as its prerequisite the defeated time of the Law. "Therefore the doctrine of the law is necessary in the church, and by all means to be kept in it, because Christ cannot be kept without it." ⁹⁶⁹⁾ And this is what the Formula of Concord states in the 6th. Article, "Of the Third Usage of the Law," confesses to error and vacillation on the basis of Scripture: "We believe, teach, and confess that the sermon of the law is to be diligently practiced not only among the unbelieving and impenitent, but also among the true believers (*qui vere in Christ credunt*), the truly converted, the born-again, and those justified by faith," stating: "For though they may be born again and regenerated in the spirit of their minds, yet such rebirth and regeneration is not perfect in this world." ⁹⁷⁰⁾ In addition, it will be explained in detail how the law and the gospel are bound together in the Christian. First, because the Christian still sins daily according to the flesh, but at the same time is still inclined according to the same flesh not to recognize sin correctly, but even to imagine "that his work and life are completely pure and perfect," ⁹⁷¹⁾ and because consequently the Christian stands in danger of falling from the faith, the law must continually reveal and rebuke sin in him, and on the other hand he must daily draw comfort from the gospel that his sins are forgiven him for Christ's sake. The Formula of Concord expresses this in this way: "Therefore, whenever believers stumble, they are punished by the Holy Spirit out of the law, and by the same Spirit are raised up again and comforted with the

967) op. cit., 881.

968) To Gal. 3:23. St. L. IX, 452.




969) Luther, fifth disputation, sentence 66. St. L. XX, 1646. Cf. in the same disputation sentences 40-45.


970) *Epitome* 536, 3. 4. [Trigl. 805, 3-4 ]

Concord 644, 21. [Trigl. 969, Sol. Decl., VI, 21 ]

971) Formula of

Sermon of the Holy Gospel.⁹⁷²⁾ — Secondly, because the Christian is inclined according to the flesh to err with regard to the good works that God wants him to do, he still has to learn from the law of God, as the unchanging standard of a godly life, what God's will is for him. Formula of Concord: "Therefore also such doctrine of the law is necessary for the believers, lest they fall into their own holiness and devotion, and under the appearance of the Spirit of God perform their own chosen worship, without God's word and command, as it is written Deut. 12: 'Ye shall do none of these things, every man whatsoever seemeth him right: but hear the commandments and the statutes which I command you, neither add unto them, nor take away from them.'" ⁹⁷³⁾ The gospel, however, must be continually put to use with regard to good works, in order to work the desire and the power to do the will discerned from the law of God. The Formula of Concord is also very careful to sharpen this point of view. It says: "But it must be explained in different ways what the gospel does, creates and works for the new obedience of the believers, and what in this, as far as the good works of the believers are concerned, is the work of the law. For the law says that it is God's will and command that we should walk in the new life, but it does not give the power and ability for us to begin and do it, but the Holy Spirit, who is not given and received through the law but through the sermon of the gospel, Gal. 3, renews the heart." ⁹⁷⁴⁾ — Finally, according to the flesh, the law is also used by Christians to keep the flesh in check externally. There is no rhetorical exaggeration when Luther⁹⁷⁵⁾ and also the Formula of Concord⁹⁷⁶⁾ say that the flesh of Christians never becomes pious in this life, but thoroughly retains its character as "enmity against God" (ἐχθρὰ εἰς θεόν Rom. 8:7). Scripture, indeed, says of the flesh of Christians negatively, that nothing good dwells in it,⁹⁷⁷⁾ and positively, that it lies at war against the new man (ἀντιστρατεύεται),⁹⁷⁸⁾ By this constitution also the flesh of Christians can only be forced outwardly into obedience to the will of God, and this compulsion is put upon it both by the verbal and the real preaching of the law, viz.

972) Formula of Concord 624, 14. [[Trigl. 967, ibid., 14](#) , 973) 644, 20. [[Trigl. 969, ibid., 20](#) , 974) 642, 10. 11. [[Trigl. 965, ibid., 10-11](#) 

975) [St. L. IX, 880](#). 976) 643, 19. [[Trigl. 969, ibid., 20](#) , 977) Rom. 7:18.

978) Rom. 7:23.

by the threat of God's eternal wrath⁹⁷⁹⁾ and by the imposition of plagues in this life.⁹⁸⁰⁾ Formula of Concord:⁹⁸¹⁾ "For the old Adam, as the intractable, refractory ass (*quasi asinus indomitus et contumax*), is also still a matter in them, which not only with the doctrine of the law, admonition, driving, and threatening, but also often with the bludgeon of punishments and plagues to compel into the obedience of Christ until the flesh of sin is utterly put off, and man is perfectly renewed in the resurrection, having no need of the sermon of the law, nor of its threatenings and chastisements, nor of the gospel, which belong to this imperfect life."

5. The difficulty of properly distinguishing law and gospel. ^

The separation of law and gospel is difficult. Not in theory, because it is easy to say what is law and what is gospel. Not only shorter but also longer definitions of law and gospel are easy to memorize. The distinction between law and gospel is difficult in practice, especially in one's own heart and conscience. Luther rightly reminds us again and again that the separation of law and gospel is beyond the powers of the natural man and can only be accomplished by the action of the Holy Spirit. The reason for this lies in the natural constitution of man. The natural man seeks God's grace and salvation from the law, that is, he seeks that from the law which is obtained only through the gospel. This, the *opinio legis*, is a fixed idea with him. And every man remains on this fixed idea until God's grace and power turns his heart away from the law and toward the gospel.⁹⁸²⁾ Again, from this point — from the point of the distinction between law and gospel — it becomes clear that the conversion or becoming a believer of a man is merely a work of divine grace and omnipotence, without any cooperation on the part of man. Seen in terms of the inner psychological processes, conversion takes place in such a way that the divine judgment of condemnation, which is spoken into the heart of man through the law, is replaced by the divine judgment of justification through the gospel.

979) Mark. 9:43 ff. 980) 2 Cor. 12:7 ff; 1 Cor. 9:27.

981) 645, 24. [Trigl. 969, ibid., 24 

This process, however, can only take place through God's work of grace and power. Therefore Christ says: "No one can come to me unless the Father draws him",⁹⁸³⁾ and therefore the apostle Paul reminds the Christians that their faith in Christ is a gift of grace (ἐχαρίσθη ὑμῖν ... τό εις αὐτόν μοτένεῖν)⁹⁸⁴⁾ and an effect of God's power, by which Christ was raised from the dead.⁹⁸⁵⁾ To come to Christ or to believe in Christ is nothing else than to separate law and gospel in the heart, to believe the judgment of the gospel against the judgment of the law. It has not been possible to understand that Christ describes the entrance into the kingdom of God, which always takes place only through faith, with the words: "The kingdom of heaven is taken by force, and those who need power seize it" (ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν βιάζεται, καὶ βιασταὶ ἀρπάζουσιν αὐτήν).⁹⁸⁶⁾ One has found it inappropriate to think of faith, which after all does not stand in the power of man, nor is it a compulsion, as an act of "heaven-storming" violence. But one forgets that "to believe" is so much as: to seize against the condemnation judgment of the law the pardon judgment of the gospel. Because this is not done by human, but always only by God's creative power, so faith is described as a "doer of violence" (βιαστής). Therefore, Luther, Chemnitz, and other ancient theologians take it for granted that the ἀρπάζειν τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, "to usurp the kingdom of heaven," refers to faith.⁹⁸⁷⁾ But they take this for granted because they held that the faith by which a man becomes a member of the Christian Church is not a dormant condition in the heart (*otiosa qualitas*), but *fides actualis*, namely, the act produced by God's power, which distinguishes between law and gospel, that is, against the condemnation judgment of the law seizes the justification judgment of the gospel. And just as the initial separation between law and gospel, by which a man becomes a Christian, is so difficult that it is accomplished only by God's action, so is the continuing separation, extending through the whole Christian life,

983) Joh. 6:44.

984) Phil. 1:29.

985) Eph. 1:19. 20; Col. 2:12.

986) Matt. 11:12.

987) Cf. [II, 520, note 1210](#).

by which the Christian remains a Christian, situated entirely outside the sphere of human power. Therefore, Scripture says of Christians that they are saved to salvation by God's power through faith. For to be saved to salvation by God's power through faith is nothing else than to distinguish law and gospel by God's power, to oppose the condemnation judgment of the law, which enters the heart as a result of daily and past sins, with the acquittal judgment of the gospel. Luther says, "It is not in the power of man to remove this terrible terror which the law brings about, or any other sadness of heart."⁹⁸⁸⁾ Luther therefore also thinks it good that the Christian should not be lonely, but have the company of a Christian brethren, so that when the time of the law and the time of the gospel collide in his heart, the Christian brethren may be at hand with a word of the gospel, whereby the divine power of the gospel against the condemnatory judgment of the law may become effective.⁹⁸⁹⁾ — As for the difficulty of distinguishing between Law and Gospel for the pastor, Luther's well-known words belong here: "Let him who is well able in this art of separating the Law from the Gospel, set him on high and call him a Doctor of Holy Scriptures." It is necessary to teach the Law and the Gospel in their juxtaposition and binding with each other in such a way that those who are sure are always frightened and those who are frightened are always comforted. To this end, the pastor must not break either the law or the gospel, must not take away the sharpness of the law by adding the gospel, nor the sweetness of the gospel by adding the law, but must know how to keep both within the areas in which they are to be effective according to God's will and order, as was explained earlier. In the face of this task, the pastor will despair of all his own skill⁹⁹⁰⁾ and will agree with Luther when he says: "Without

988) St. L. IX, 446. 989) A. a. O., 421.

990) 2 Cor. 3:5: Ουχ δτι ικανοί εσμεν άφ' εαυτών, λογίοασθαι τι ως εξ εαυτών, άλλ' ή ικανό της ημών εκ του θεοϋ. These words, according to the context, refer precisely to the right judgment and handling of the Law and the Gospel. The right Christian sermon, which consists in the right separation and binding of law and gospel, is always a gift from above and has to be asked for. It is highly advisable that the pastor also

the Holy Spirit it is impossible for to make this distinction between the Law and the Gospel. I experience it in myself and see it daily in others, how difficult it is to distinguish between the doctrines of the Law and the Gospel. The Holy Spirit must be master and teacher here, or no man on earth will be able to understand or teach it. ... The art is common: soon it is said how the law is another word and doctrine than the gospel; but to distinguish *practice* and to put the art into practice is effort and work. St. Jerome also wrote much of it, but like a blind man of color." ⁹⁹¹⁾

6. The importance of distinguishing the law from the gospel. [^]

The importance of the distinction of law and gospel is evident from the fact that through it, as we have already seen, a man becomes a Christian and remains a Christian. In other words, without distinction from law and gospel, there is no personal Christianity. This is the thought that Luther prefaces his 1532 "Sermon on the Difference between the Law and the Gospel"⁹⁹²⁾ : "This difference ... is the highest art in Christianity, which all and every one who boast or accept the Christian name should be able and know. For

subjects the carefully prepared sermon to a final revision from the point of view of whether the law and the gospel are also handled correctly in it, namely in such a way that, as far as the sermon comes into consideration, the secure are frightened and the weary and burdened are comforted.

991) St. L. IX, 802. 806 f. Following on from this, the question has occasionally been raised as to how it stands with the ministerial activity and ministerial success of a personally unbelieving pastor. The fact that through the ministry of a pastor who is personally unbelieving, i.e., who does not himself distinguish law and gospel in his heart, other men are nevertheless converted, i.e., accomplish the distinction of law and gospel in their hearts, is due to the fact that the effect of the Word of God does not depend on the personal state of faith of the preacher. It is true that a pastor who does not accomplish in his own heart the distinction of law and gospel will have great difficulty in public sermons and even more in the exercise of private pastoral care with regard to the proclamation of law and gospel. After all, cases are conceivable and real in which a personally unbelieving pastor presents the law and the gospel from the Scriptures, from right theological instruction, and from rightly prepared sermon books in such a way that both knowledge of sin and faith in the gospel are wrought in the hearers.

992) St. L. IX, 798 ff.

where this aspect is lacking, a Christian cannot be recognized before a Gentile or a Jew; so even it is because of this difference." And as for the objective Christian doctrine, it is Christian only in so far as in it the difference between the Law and the Gospel is recorded. This point has already been made at length in the doctrine of justification under the section, "The Doctrine of Justification and the Distinction of Law and Gospel."⁹⁹³ Indeed, the Christian doctrine of justification coincides in substance with the distinction of law and gospel. And to be sure, the separation of law from justification must be a pure one. Justification, as Luther reminds us, must also not be made dependent on one faithful "Lord's Prayer,"⁹⁹⁴ if the doctrine is to retain its Christian and comforting character. We refer here to a passage in Walther's *Pastorale* where it is stated: "To the purity of doctrine belongs also that the word of truth be 'rightly divided,' that is, that law and gospel be well distinguished."⁹⁹⁵ As a warning, Walther specifies the most viable mixtures of law and gospel. He writes: "Whoever deprives the law of its sharpness through the gospel, and the gospel of its sweetness through the law; whoever teaches in such a way that those who are secure are comforted, and those who are frightened by their sins are still more frightened; whoever, instead of pointing to the means of grace, points those who are afflicted by the law only to prayer for grace; who, in the exposition of the law, its demands and threats, presents it as if God, according to the law, were content for the Christian to do as much as he can, but overlooks the weaknesses, and presents the gospel as if it were only a consolation for the already pious; he who seeks to induce the unborn to good works by the demands, threats and promises of the law, and demands of those who are still without faith the relinquishment of sin, love of God and neighbor; he who demands a special degree of repentance and comforts only those who have already become other men; he who confuses not being able to believe with not being allowed to believe, and the like: such a one does not rightly divide the word of truth, but mixes and blends law and

993) [II, 659 ff.](#)
[note 1542.](#)

994) Cf. the quotation from Luther [II, 660,](#)

995) *Pastorale*, [p. 79](#) f.

Gospel with one another; his doctrine, therefore, though he otherwise preaches Law and Gospel, is, indeed, properly defined in right distinction, a false one."

Furthermore, it should be especially emphasized what was mentioned earlier, that only with a pure separation of law and gospel is preserved the comforting character of the Christian religion. For as by the interference of the law with the gospel Christ's vicarious fulfillment of the law, and thus Christ's merit, is denied,⁹⁹⁶⁾ so by the same disorderly and ungodly procedure also the certainty of God's grace for men is abolished⁹⁹⁷⁾ and thus Christians are robbed of the consolation which they need in life and death. There can be no talk of the certitudo gratiae et salutis, which is to be found among Christians,⁹⁹⁸⁾ until man is completely free from the law in his conscience before God, that is, until he believes, through the action of the Holy Spirit on the basis of the Gospel, that God does not require a single work for the attainment of grace and salvation, but accepts him as he is, irrespective of what he does or does not do, for the sake of Christ. Concerning this necessary banishment of the law from the conscience when grace and salvation are involved, Luther says: "It is impossible for Christ and the law to dwell in the heart at the same time; for either the law or Christ must depart. If you stand in the opinion that Christ and trust in the law can dwell together in the heart, then you should certainly know that it is not Christ but the devil who dwells in your heart, who accuses and terrifies you under the form of Christ and requires the law and the works of the law for righteousness. But the right Christ, as I also said shortly before, does not address you because of your sins, nor does he make you trust in your good works. And the right knowledge of Christ, or faith, does not dispute whether thou hast done good works unto righteousness, or evil works unto condemnation, but holds plainly, If thou hast done good works, thou shalt not therefore be justified; if thou hast done evil works, thou shalt not therefore be condemned." ⁹⁹⁹⁾


Finally, it should be pointed out that the distinction between law and gospel is necessary for the understanding of Scripture.

996) Gal. 4:4- 5; 2:21. 997) Gal. 3:10.

998) Rom. 4:16.

999) St. L. IX, 619.

The Formula of Concord is said to hold over this distinction "with special diligence" because the same is "a particularly glorious light, which serves that God's Word may be rightly divided and the holy prophets' and apostles' writings actually declared and understood."¹⁰⁰⁰⁾ There is no exaggeration in this confessional statement. Scripture says, on the one hand, "Do this and you will live," and on the other, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life." How can we deal with these scriptural words, which are like yes and no to each other? It is not possible in the way that we refer the law to the town hall with the Antinomians. Christ forbids us to do so when he says: "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven."¹⁰⁰¹⁾ Nor does he go about it in such a way that we relegate the Gospel, which tells us of Christ's *satisfactio vicaria* and of justification by faith without works of the law, to the Middle Ages with the Unitarians and modern theologians, or to a period of defective formation of Christian doctrine. Christ's apostle also forbids us this reference when he says: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed!"¹⁰⁰²⁾ But Paul preached the gospel of Christ's substitutionary satisfaction and of justification by faith without the doing of the law.¹⁰⁰³⁾ Nor can the controversy between the words of the Law and the words of the Gospel be done in such a way that we would compromise between them and say: Man is saved and justified partly by grace for Christ's sake, and partly by his own works. Scripture rejects this compromise when it says, "And if by grace, then, is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace."¹⁰⁰⁴⁾ Thus only one way of understanding Scripture, remains: we let both the words of the law and the words of the gospel stand in their entirety, but distinguish between law and gospel in such a way that we let them remain in the areas assigned to them by God. The law is for the revelation of sin, not for the forgiveness of sin.

1000) 633, 1. [[Trigl. 951.1](#) , 1001) Matt. 5:19 1002) Gal. 1:8-9.
1003) Rom. 3:23-24, 28. 1004) Rom. 11:6.

For the latter purpose the gospel is given. Therefore, if the law has revealed sin, it is to be kept silent and the gospel alone is to have and keep the word, as has been explained in detail above. This, and only this, is how the Scriptures are understood.

We would like to point out a few more details. Not only the Roman, but also the Protestant synergists of all shades make scriptural passages like 1 Cor. 10:12: "Whoever lets himself think that he is standing may well see that he does not fall" and scriptural passages like Rom. 8:38 f.: "I am sure that neither death nor life ... may separate us from the love of God. may separate us from the love of God," and then teach in all seriousness that a Christian should not be certain of his salvation, but should vacillate between fear and hope. He who can distinguish between law and gospel leaves both series of scriptural statements standing in their entirety. But he refers the scriptural passages that contain warnings against apostasy to the Christian according to the old man, inasmuch as the Christian is still troubled by carnal certainty, which is to be rebuked from the law, and the scriptural passages that state the certainty of salvation he refers to the Christian according to the new man, inasmuch as the Christian as a poor sinner is to believe the gospel and actually does believe.¹⁰⁰⁵⁾ — Also the passage Heb. 12:14: "Without sanctification no man shall see the Lord" has been given whimsical and impossible interpretations in order to harmonize it with the scriptural words which promise salvation to faith without works of the law (χωρίς έργων νόμου). The proper harmonization is that the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews are recognized as law, namely, as a warning against carnal security, and therefore are to be held against Christians insofar as they stand in danger of falling prey to carnal security. In so far as Christians are frightened and humbled and believe the gospel of salvation for Christ's sake, those threatening and punishing words are of no concern to them.

7. The deniers of the distinction between the law and the gospel. ^

The distinction between the law and the gospel is canceled by:

1. The Romanists. The *Tridentinum* demands with great firmness that the Law be blended into the Gospel. It curses the doctrine "as if the Gospel were only a mere and

1005) Cf. II. 662; III, 116, note 467.

unconditional promise of eternal life, without the condition of keeping the commandments".¹⁰⁰⁶⁾ Rome needs the mixture of law and gospel in order not to allow the certainly of grace and salvation, which would destroy the kingdom of the pope, to arise.

2. the Calvinists. Because the Calvinists teach particular grace and the immediate effect of grace, they must instruct the consciences struck by the law to base the gracious disposition of God, instead of the means of grace, on *gratia infusa*, on inner transformation, that is, on sanctification and good works. Calvinism is so little a protection against the "ergism" (salvation by works) of Rome, that is, against the transformation of the Gospel into law, that it necessarily includes this transformation every time.¹⁰⁰⁷⁾ Because the direct effect of the spirit assumed by Calvinism does not exist at all, the alleged effect of the spirit must be replaced by its own product. This is why Calvinists set up definitions of the gospel that are actually law and agree with the definitions of all other works teachers. Namely, they describe the gospel as a mere "plan of salvation" or an explanation of the conditions by the performance of which man becomes a partaker of divine grace. Alexander Hodge answers the question, "What is included in the external call?": "1. A declaration of the *plan of salvation*. 2. A declaration of *duty* on the part of the sinner to repent and believe. 3. A declaration of the *motives* which ought to influence the sinner's mind, such as fear or hope, remorse or gratitude! 4. A promise of acceptance in the case of all those who comply with the *conditions*."¹⁰⁰⁸⁾ To Calvinists, the gospel is everything else but the proclamation and presentation of the forgiveness of sins acquired by Christ. Likewise, Charles Hodge says of the "universal call", "Being a proclamation of the *terms* on which God is willing to save sinners, and an exhibition of the *duty* of fallen men in relation to that plan, it of necessity binds all those who are in the condition which the plan coritemplates. It is in this respect analogous to the moral law."¹⁰⁰⁹⁾ As an aside, from this Calvinist view

1006) *Sess. VI, can. 20.*

1007) Against Seeberg, *Dogmengesch. II, 304. 300.*

1008) *Outlines*, p. 333 sq.

1009) *Systemat. Theol., II, 642.*

of the gospel is also understood in which sense even strict Calvinists occasionally speak of a "general offer of the gospel".¹⁰¹⁰⁾ They may speak thus in contradiction with their doctrine of particular grace, inasmuch as they understand by gospel not the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins available to all and singular persons of the human world through Christ, but the proclamation of a principle or the announcement of a number of duties and conditions, which at first do not apply to persons at all, but only acquire a relation to persons when they have submitted to the duties and fulfilled the conditions imposed.

3. The Synergists. Because the synergists allow the promise of grace of the gospel to refer only to those men who, in distinction from others, conduct themselves properly, namely, set themselves right personally, conduct themselves rightly towards grace, refrain from willful cessation, make the possible faith real, etc., they thus abolish the distinction between law and gospel. To them also the gospel is conditioned by human performance. Therefore, they do not understand the gospel as an amnesty decree extending to all persons of the human world, but as an announcement of a plan of salvation or a principle which has the content that God wants to be merciful to those men who accomplish personal self-establishment, the right behavior, etc.. In other words, the synergists include a variously named human achievement in the gospel from the outset as a condition. They mean with Theodor Zahn that the gospel from the outset does not apply to all, but "always only to some men, namely to those who are willing to fulfill the set condition" ("personal conduct")¹⁰¹¹⁾ The synergists falsify both the law and the gospel, since neither the law nor the gospel admits any difference among men in their relationship before God. The Law

1010) So also Charles Hodge, op. cit., p. 648: "If any one holds any view of the decrees of God, or of the satisfaction of Christ, or of any other Scriptural doctrine, which hampers him in making this *general* offer of the Gospel, he may be sure that his views or his logical processes are wrong."

1011) Cf. above, p. 238 f.

condemns all without distinction, and the gospel promises grace to all without distinction. Rom. 3:23-24: "There is no difference here (διαστολή); they are all (πάντες) sinners ... And are justified without merit by his grace through the redemption that came by Jesus Christ."

4. All deniers of the *satisfactio vicaria*. The scriptural doctrine of the vicarious satisfaction of Christ is based — to speak in modern terms — on a "twofold certainty" in God. First, the "certainty" that God is inviolable holiness and righteousness, according to which he demands from men the keeping of his law given to men and is angry with the transgressors. Then the "certainty" that there is a wonderful love in God, according to which God gave his Son to the world and reconciled the world with himself through his actions and suffering. Hence the matter stands in such a way that all who deny the vicarious satisfaction of Christ dismiss both the law and the gospel, and therefore also the difference between the two. What Frank says specifically against Ritschl is true of all deniers of *satisfactio vicaria*: "It is all designed and tailored to exclude the hated doctrine of the atonement of the law" (?) "and hereby the doctrine of 'law and gospel.'" ¹⁰¹²⁾ This is also true of Ihmels and of Frank himself, insofar as both tamper with the vicarious satisfaction of Christ. ¹⁰¹³⁾

5. The representatives of the "higher unity" of law and gospel. Since theology has given up letting the Scriptures be the source and norm of Christian doctrine, it has had the habit of making the so-called "unified conception", the "harmony without contradiction", etc. of the individual parts of Christian doctrine the criterion of truth. This kind of doctrine has also been applied to the doctrines of the Law and the Gospel. In more recent times, there is talk of a "higher unity" which theology must seek between the Law and the Gospel. The opinion is that there cannot be a contradiction between law and gospel with regard to their content, but only a gradual difference. Both are intended to

1012) Dogmatic Studies, p. 129.

1013) Cf. on Ihmels II, 435 ff., Uber Frank II, 419 and on modern theology in general the section: "More detailed description of modern theories of reconciliation", II, 429 ff.

demand moral performance from man. Only the works demanded by the gospel are different in quantity and quality. The gospel is understood as a modified law. At least the later Luther no longer saw and held on to this higher unity between law and gospel. Zwingli, on the other hand, unlike Luther, recognized the complete essential equality of the law and the gospel.¹⁰¹⁴⁾ To this it must be said: One could, however, speak in a proper sense of a "higher unity" between law and gospel, namely in the sense that both are God's word, or, more concretely expressed, that it is one and the same God who demands and accuses in the law and in the gospel drops all demands and therefore also does not accuse, but only absolves. Luther and other ancient theologians speak thus: *Lex est Deus accusans et damnans; evangelium est Deus absolvens et iustificans*. [Google] But this "higher unity," according to which both are Word of God and in both one and the same God acts with men, is precisely to be rejected. This conception of God and God's action is described as lacking the "unity of the concept", as "piecemeal", "two-layered", whereby a rational being, as man is, cannot calm down. Hence the endeavor to bring law and gospel under a unified higher concept in such a way that not only the promise of the law, but also the promise of the gospel is allowed to be conditioned by human action, right conduct, personal self-establishment, etc. But in this way, as we have seen, not only the promise of the law, but also the promise of the gospel is conditioned by human action, right conduct, personal self-establishment, and so on. But in this way, as we saw, the gospel is transformed into law,

1014) Thus Schenkel, [Wesen des Protestantismus 1, 173 ff.](#) In Frank, op. cit., [p. 115](#). With respect to Zwingli, however, it is true that he makes law out of the gospel. This is also said by Seeberg, [Dogmengesch. II, 299](#): "Zwingli does not feel that the law is the expression of another worldview; imperceptibly the gospel becomes the nüven gesetz (I, 311)." That the acceptance of particular grace and of the immediate action of the Spirit consequently dismisses the gospel has been demonstrated above. Luther rightly judged that the enthusiasts "under Christ's name teach their dreams, under the name of the doctrine only laws and ceremonies. Thus they are and always remain the same as they were, that is, monks, laborers, teachers of doctrines and ceremonies, except that they devise new names and works." ([St. L. IX, 414](#).) The fact that Zwingli and Calvin also contain a lot of gospel comes from the fact that they stood under the powerful influence of Luther's Reformation. But the gospel does not fit into the system peculiar to Zwingli and Calvin, whose essential components are particular grace and the immediate effect of the Spirit.

and Luther and the Lutheran Confessions are not to be blamed, but to be praised, that they have not entered into this higher unity, but stick to the fact that law and gospel, taken in the actual sense, are, according to their content, perfect opposites, *plus quam contradictoria*, in that the Law only demands and condemns, but the Gospel demands nothing and therefore does not condemn either, but only promises and gives grace and salvation for Christ's sake, without any performance on the part of man. As for the "piecemeal" or "two-layered" character of our knowledge of God, if we take law and gospel as *contradictoria* according to their content, we again recall the scriptural *ceterum censeo*, that we men in this life have no other than "piecemeal" or fragmentary knowledge of God, ἐκ μέρους γινώσκωμεν καὶ ἐκ μέρους προφητεύομεν ... ἄρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μέρους ["We know in part, and we prophesy in part. . . . Now I know in part."].¹⁰¹⁵⁾ We men — theologians included — do not know in this life what is in God. In other words, we do not have in this life a "unified view" of God's being, attributes, and doings. The unified view belongs to the "upper school" above. We are bound with our knowledge of God on this side to the revelation of God in His Word. This revelation, however, is — in condescension to our weakness — "piecemeal", namely according to qualities that are different for our knowledge. This finds its application to law and gospel. According to his righteousness, God assigns sinners to hell; according to his grace, he assigns the same sinners in the same condition to heaven. How both qualities or "determinations" unite in the one, indivisible God to the higher unity" is beyond our "cognitive" grasp. Scripture gives us no further information than that the gospel judgment of grace upon sinners condemned by the law is mediated with God (*in Deo, apud Deum*) through the redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις, redemption) that took place through Christ Jesus. Let us only beware that we do not let the promise of grace of the Gospel be conditioned by something in man (*aliquid in homine*), such as right conduct, personal self-setting, etc.! In this way we would gain a "higher unity" for law and gospel, namely the higher unity of human

1015) 1 Cor. 13:9, 12.

performance, but we would thereby lose the *differentia specifica* of Christianity, the gospel, which alone can make souls saved. Here again, in the doctrines of law and gospel, we come up against the crux theologorum. According to Scripture, we must teach and believe "piecemeal" or "two-layered," that is, without rational mediation, that those who are saved are saved by God's grace alone, and those who are lost are lost by their guilt alone. We could easily establish the "higher unity" between these propositions by assuming, with the synergists, a lesser guilt and a "different", that is, better behavior on the part of the saved in comparison with the lost. But with this we would violate the Scriptures, which teach the same guilt and the same evil behavior on the part of the saved. Thus, in the doctrine of the Law and the Gospel, we must refrain from trying to establish the "higher unity" between the two by making the Gospel conditional on human performance as well.¹⁰¹⁶⁾

1016) The most powerful human writing, as on the doctrine of justification, so on the doctrine of law and gospel, is Luther's detailed commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. Latin: Erl., *curavit* Irmischer, 3 vols.; German: St. L. IX, 9 ff. On the French and English translations, cf. Hoppe, St. L. IX, 2, note, and Walch, *Bibliotheca Theol.* IV, 696 sq. Luther's writings directed especially against antinomianism were listed under note 921. All of Luther's writings are characterized by the clear distinction between law and gospel, which is why Dr. Walther used to say that no writer makes so sure of God's grace as Luther. In the 17th century, the material pertaining to the doctrine of Law and Gospel is probably best and most abundantly gathered in Gerhard's *loci*, *Locus de Lege* and *Locus de Evangelio*. Within the Missouri Synod, the doctrine of the distinction of law and gospel has been continually treated in the publications, synodal reports, and special writings. We cite: Walther, "Law and Gospel," 1878. Same, "Law and Gospel," 1897 [1893 edition, 1901 edition [Archive.org](#); done into English by W. H. T. Dau: *The Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, 1929]. F. Bente, "Law and Gospel," 1917 [English translation of the *Lehre und Wehre* articles (*LuW* vol. 63, 241, 298, 349) that this book was based on has the same name: *Law and Gospel: Repentance and Good Works* [here](#)]. F. Pieper, "The Difference of Law and Gospel," Report of the Iowans Distr. 1880. Same, "The Practical Importance of the Right Divorce of Law and Gospel," Report of the Kansas Distr. 1892. G. Stöckhardt, "The Different Effects of Law and Gospel," L. u. W. 1887, 154 ff.

Baptism. [^]

(De baptismo.)

1. The divine order of baptism. [^]

Baptism is not merely a church order, but a divine order (*institutio divina*), which is valid until the Last Day and for all nations. It is not less divine order than the sermon of the Gospel and the doctrines of the divine Word in general, with which it is composed by the command word of Christ Matt. 28:19-20 is composed: Πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν· καὶ ἰδοὺ, ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας εὼς τῆς συντέλειας τοῦ αἰῶνος ["Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world!"]. The divine order also emerges from the apostolic practice. Immediately on the first feast of Pentecost we find baptism in practice, not as good counsel, but by commandment, and in reference to all faithful individuals. Peter's words are, "Repent, and be baptized (βαπτισθήτω ἕκαστος) every one of you in the name of JEsu Christ for the remission of sins."¹⁰¹⁷) Likewise it is said of Peter in the house of Cornelius, "He commanded them to be baptized (προσέταξε αὐτοὺς βαπτισθῆναι) in the name of the Lord."¹⁰¹⁸)

That the Quakers reject baptism follows from their rejection of the external means of grace in general. They substitute spiritual and fire baptism for water baptism. The Socinians admit in the later editions of the Rakau Catechism that baptism was ordained by Christ, but only for that time. Likewise the Salvation Army. The latter parallels water baptism with circumcision, clipping the hair, washing of the feet of the saints, and other "Jewish ceremonies" which "should never be binding on our conscience".¹⁰¹⁹)

Recent theologians, especially of a critical trend, but not only they, strive with all their might to prove that Christian baptism cannot be traced back to a command of Christ to baptize. While admitting that baptism was in general use in the apostolic church, the apostles and congregations, for several reasons, such as Jewish and

1017) Acts 2:38.

1018) Acts 10:48.

1019) The evidence in Günther, Symbolik 4, p. 294 [Popular Symbolics, p. 329].

pagan analogies and prompted by John's baptism, may have come to baptism on its own. Holtzmann, for example, admits¹⁰²⁰⁾ that "the Christian baptismal custom belongs to the original possession of all Christianity", but at the same time claims that "an actual institution by the historical Jesus" cannot be proven. Matthew ascribes ch. 28:19 the baptismal command to the risen Christ. Now the belief in the risen Christ is also "original Christian common property",¹⁰²¹⁾ but this belief is not based on the fact of the resurrection of Christ, but on the desire, especially of Peter and Paul, to have a risen Savior. Thus Holtzmann "proved" that there is no "actual" baptismal command of Christ. For, to be sure, if Christ is not risen, then the risen Christ could not give the baptismal command reported by Matthew. Holtzmann complains,¹⁰²²⁾ that "the Lutheran representative theologian A. von Öttingen" accuses him of "dogmatic prejudice". Von Öttingen, without becoming unobjective, could have said more. Holtzmann is, after all, the whole Christian doctrine *terra incognita*. Nevertheless, he presents individual parts of the doctrine, such as the doctrine of *satisfactio vicaria* in Paul, objectively correctly, as we have also acknowledged. But in the doctrine of baptism, and especially with regard to Christ's command to baptize, his animus against Christianity leads him to one logical absurdity after another. That the apostles did not know Christ's command to baptize, he wants to prove from the fact that Paul himself baptized only a little (1 Cor. 1:14), and that Peter indeed commands to baptize in the house of Cornelius, but does not baptize himself.¹⁰²³⁾ Also the evangelist John is said to have known no command of Christ to baptize, because he reports chap. 3:22; 4:2 that Christ did baptize, but did not perform the baptism "with his own hand". Whoever not only allows himself such absurdities but also presents them in a tone of superiority, proves that he has lost his objective point of view regarding baptism and the command to baptize.¹⁰²⁴⁾ Against the

1020) Neutest. Theol. I, 452.

1021) op. cit., p. 433.

1022) op. cit., p. 450, note.

1023) So also Pastor Feine in RE. ³

XIX, 397.

1024) As such, who have also "proven" "the unhistorical nature of the Matthean baptismal command", Holtzmann names among others: de Wette, Schölten, Hilgenfeld, Lipsius, Jülicher, Weizsäcker, Pfeleiderer, Harnack. "The formal authenticity of the words of institution, especially the Trinitarian formula, is also disputed by Bossert, Beyschlag, B. Weiß, A. and R. Seeberg, and Feine."

"historicity" of the command to baptize Matt. 28:19 has also been objected — and not only by those whose faith in Christ ends with the "died and buried" — that the first Christians could not be trusted with such a "reflection" on Father, Son and Holy Spirit as Matt. 28:19 to the first Christians. It must be said that the theologians who raise this objection date their own deficit in the knowledge of Christian doctrine 1800 years backwards and transfer it quite unhistorically to the first Christians. According to everything we know from the Gospels and the letters of the apostles about the state of knowledge of the first Christians, the knowledge of the Father and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit belonged to the ABC of their faith. Therefore, we are not surprised that already in the "Didache"¹⁰²⁵⁾ and then in Justin¹⁰²⁶⁾ the baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is addressed as something natural and well-known.

If newer theologians of a positive trend recognize baptism as an order which, according to God's will and command, is to remain in the church until the Last Day, but at the same time, in contrast to the old theologians, reject the "statutory legal" character of the order,¹⁰²⁷⁾ the meaning of the contrast is not clear. Since baptism is a special form of witnessing and application of the gospel, the church's being bound to baptism is no more legal than its being bound to the sermon of the gospel. According to Lutheran doctrine, the fact that a man can possess grace and salvation even without baptism¹⁰²⁸⁾ is due to the fact that the word of the gospel conveys not only a part but the whole of the salvation acquired by Christ. But this does not deprive baptism of the character of the divine order any more than the Lord's Supper ceases to be a divine order because even without it faith in the forgiveness of sins can exist on the basis of the word of the Gospel.

1025) Ch. 7:1, ed. Harnack, p. 22: Βαπτίζατε εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τὸν πατὴρ καὶ τὸν υἱὸν καὶ τὸν ἅγιον πνεῦματος.

1026) The Apology I, 61 (St. L. ed., 65): Ἐπ' ὀνόματος τὸν πατὴρ τῶν δῶν καὶ δεσπότην θεὸν καὶ τὸν σωτήρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ πνεῦματος ἁγίου τὸ ἐν τῷ ὕδατι τότε λοντρὸν ποιοῦνται.

1027) Cf. F. Kattenbusch in RE.³ XIX, 423.

1028) This has always been asserted in enthusiastic circles against the divine order or against baptism as a means of grace.

God is "abundantly rich in grace"¹⁰²⁹⁾ and therefore, in condescension to our practical need, does not merely give "one way, counsel, and help against sin". This point is covered again under "Necessity of Baptism".

2. The material of baptism. ^

The fact that the old theologians speak of a matter of baptism and understand by it water and the application of water is not a bad modus docendi.¹⁰³⁰⁾ However, water belongs to baptism, because the Scriptures do not mention any other "element" with which baptism could also be performed. If another liquid is substituted for water, this makes baptism uncertain, and the person thus "baptized" is to be regarded as not baptized.¹⁰³¹⁾ What the

1029) Smalc. Art., p. 319. [Trigl. 491, Smalc. Art., Part III, Art. IV]

1030) Baier III, 443.

1031) The further execution in Walther's *Pastorale*, p. 113 ff. Cf. Luther's and Bugenhagen's expert opinion on a baptism performed without water, St. L. X, 2128 ff: "She" (the midwife who had performed the "baptism") "says: 'I baptized without water, with the Word of God alone, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' For now, this is a mocking lie: 'I have baptized', and yet says: 'without water'. The little word 'baptize' brings water with it, because it means to bathe or to immerse or to make wet with water. Christ commanded us to baptize with water, Joh. 3:5; Eph. 5:26, as also the apostles and others baptized with water, as can be seen in the book of Acts. On the other hand, this is the lie of the devil, that she says: 'with the Word of God alone'. Word of God in baptism is Christ's command: But Christ commanded to baptize with water; therefore this supposed baptism is not with God's Word, but without God's Word, and straightway against God's Word, that is, Christ's command. Third, that it adds to such blasphemy and falsehood: "In the name of the Father," etc., is an abominable misuse of the name of God against the other commandment. Therefore let such little children, as not baptized, nor baptize unto salvation, as Christ hath besought." Beza's statement in a letter (*Opp.* III, p. 196; in Gerh., *De bapt.* § 72) that he believed he could baptize with any liquid as validly as with water in case of need is frivolous. Böhl, too, confines himself (*Dogmatik*, p. 553) to saying, "If at all possible," water should be used in baptism and bread and wine in the Lord's Supper. Luther (X, 2068): "If you wanted to use something other than the certain creature or named creature [*scil.* water] and yet use the right words: 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit', that would not be baptized, but would be a sham and a mockery of the sacrament, as one who willfully transgresses the order and command by which the creature is clearly named."

application of water involves, it can be done by immersion or sprinkling, because βαπτίζειν does not mean immersion, but any kind of washing.¹⁰³²⁾

3. What makes baptism baptism (*forma baptismi*). ^

Baptism includes water and the application of water, as we have seen. But what makes baptism Christ's baptism is the fact that Christ has given his word, the word of command and promise, to this application of water. This is expressed by the much quoted words of Augustine: *Accedit verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum.*¹⁰³³⁾ Thus, baptism involves a. water, b. the application of the water, c. Christ's

1032) According to Luke 11:38, the Pharisee was surprised that Christ had not first baptized Himself (ἐβαπτίσθη) before the meal. Νίπτειν and βαπτίζειν are apparently used as synonyms in Scripture. Mark. 7 it says v. 3: The Pharisees do not eat without having washed their hands (εάν μη νίψωνται τὰς χεῖρας). In the following verse, "baptize" is substituted for "wash": "they do not eat without being baptized" (εάν μη βαπτίσωνται), and following this it is added that the Jews have the custom of washing cups, jars, metal vessels, and table stocks to baptize (παρέλαβον κρατεῖν βαπτισ-μονς ποτηρίων καὶ ξεστῶν καὶ χαλκίων καὶ κλινῶν). So also Cremer: "According to Mark. 7:4: Luke 11:38 ... βαπτίζειν seems to have been the technical term for these [Levitical] washings at that time." In Walthers, Pastorale, pp. 115 f., is compiled about all that can be said about the matter: "Since the word used in the original text of the words of institution signifies every kind of washing, and since by the external form of baptism not only the burial into death (Rom. 6:3, 4), but also the washing away of sins (Acts 22:16), the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3:5-6) and being sprinkled with Christ's blood (Hebr. 10:22; cf. Ex. 24:8; Hebr. 9:19; 1 Cor. 10:2); since also in baptism the application of water does not effect the washing away of the body (1 Pet. 3:21), but only the washing away from the soul, which is thereby effected by means of the word; and since finally the power of baptism is not hidden in the water, therefore much water does not have more power than little: so in each of these mentioned forms the baptism is valid *caeteris paribus* (if everything else is correct). As immersion is not to be rejected, though the same less clearly intimates washing and being sprinkled with the blood of Christ; so also pouring and continued sprinkling are not to be rejected, though by these forms less clearly intimates being buried in death. However, a servant of the orthodox church has to conform all the more to the form that has become customary among them, since the Anabaptists still today want to make these *adiaphoris*, contrary to God's Word of God and truth and contrary to Christian freedom in particular, essential components of baptism. Gal. 2:4-5."

1033) In *Ioh. Tractatus* 80. opp. IX, 303.

Word. What this Word of God is, which must be added to the application of the water, we do not need to give to our own thoughts, since Christ does not merely give the command: "Baptize!" but adds the closer definition: "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Luther says in reference to the Word of God, which must be added to the application of water: ¹⁰³⁴⁾ "If you were to baptize a child with water and say an Our Father or something else from Scripture and the Word of God over it, this would not be called a true baptism, and it is not enough for you to say, 'If the water belonging to baptism and the Word of God are there,' for the third matter is still lacking, that God has not commanded you to say such words" (such as Our Father, etc.)." "Here in baptism we can prove that he commands us and tells us to baptize, that is, to lower the man into the water and to say the words 'in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.' For such baptisms of water I have not yet chosen any man to be, as the magicians or papal consecrators of the host [*Fladenweiher*], nor devised the words myself, nor spoken them out of my own devotion; but both water and word are clearly and distinctly named to me, and are comprehended in his command, and thus preserved." ¹⁰³⁵⁾

Unfortunately, we have to say something more about "baptismal formulas". Newer theologians have succeeded in spreading a kind of terror, as before all "formulas", so especially before the "baptismal formula": "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit". Also Nösgen ¹⁰³⁶⁾ is obviously infected by this terror when he says that Matt. 28:19 "is, however, formally not a baptismal formula in the strict sense of the word commanded". But Nösgen braces himself and adds: "Materially, however, the baptismal formula is contained in it all the more, since the historical occurrence of many a βαπτίσματα [baptisms] conditioned it from the outset to pronounce each time" (*scil.* at each baptism) "for what purpose and goal the βαπτίζειν would be performed on the person to be baptized. But the utterance of the εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἀγίου Πνεύματος ["in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"] makes the baptized certain that by baptism he is placed in the fellowship of the triune God known by his name according to his nature." Nösgen thus very correctly reminds us that there are many a βαπτίσματα in the Gentile world on

1034) X, 2068. 2067. 1035) Likewise l. c., p. 2065, § 21.

1036) In the commentary on Matt. 28:19.

gods and men, and that therefore Christ instructs that his (Christ's) baptism among all nations should be done "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," as distinguished from all other customary baptisms.¹⁰³⁷⁾ ¶ But now the counter reasons against Matt. 28:19 as a "baptismal formula"! That Christ's command to baptize in the names of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is not to be regarded as a "baptismal formula" is to be seen from the fact that Peter on the day of Pentecost exhorts the believers to be baptized in the names of Jesus Christ (ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν), and that also otherwise in Scripture Christian Baptism is briefly called baptism "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου "Ἰησοῦν), "in the name of the Lord" (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Κυρίου) and, even more briefly, is characterized as baptism "into Jesus Christ" (εἰς Χριστόν Ἰησοῦν).¹⁰³⁸⁾ To this it must be said that the whole difficulty is a made one. There is not the slightest reason for taking these "shorter expressions," in which the baptism instituted by Christ is characterized as baptism into Christ, etc., for the baptismal formula used by the apostles, and for contrasting them with Christ's command to baptize, which is into the triune God. Quite correctly Meyer says that Peter's command Acts 10:47, to baptize "in the name of the Lord", "leaves the consummation words of baptism untouched".¹⁰³⁹⁾ The simple situation is this: By baptizing "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," according to Christ's instruction, the apostles baptized *eo ipso* in the name (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι), on the basis of the name (ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι) and also in relation to the name (εἰς τὸ ὄνομα) of Christ, Christ having indeed commanded baptism into the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thus this baptism is a baptism "in the name of Christ." This

 1037) Tertullian points (*De bapt.*, c. 5) to the same fact: *Et sacris quibusdam (nationes exterarum) per lavacrum initiantur Isidis alicuius aut Mithrae; ipsos etiam deos suos lavationibus efferunt. Ceterum villas, domos, templa, totasque urbes aspergine circumlatae aquae expiant passim; certe ludis Apollinaribus et Pelusiis tinguntur. Idque se in regenerationem et impunitatem periuriorum suorum agere praesumunt. Item penes veteres quisquis se homicidio infecerat purgatrice aqua se expiabat.* [Google] Cf. Bretschneider, *Dogmatik 4 II*, 626. text and note 501.

1038) Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:47; Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3.

1039) Meyer seems to get into contradiction with himself, because he brings (to Matt. 28:19) the "short expression": baptize "into Christ", "on the name of Christ" in contrast to Matt. 28:19 as a "baptismal formula".

Baptism is also based on Christ's name because it is acquired through Christ's substitutionary satisfaction, as Eph. 5:26 explicitly teaches: "Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it (εαυτὸν τηρέδωκεν νπερ αὐτης, *satisfactio vicaria*), that he might sanctify it by cleansing it through the bath of water in the word" (καθαρίσας τὸ λοντρώ τον νδατυς εν δήματι). And as to the baptism εις το δνομα τον Κυρίον Ἰησοῦ, upon or in the name of Christ JESU, it must not be forgotten that the confession of the name of Christ always comprehends in itself the confession of the Holy Trinity. This is clear doctrine of the Scriptures. When in the name of Jesus (εν τῷ ὄνοματι Ἰησον) all those knees bow who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and all tongues confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, they thereby at the same time honor God the Father,¹⁰⁴⁰⁾ and at the same time they worship the Holy Spirit, without whom no one is able to call Jesus a Lord.¹⁰⁴¹⁾ Scherzer rightly says according to the processes of church fathers: "The confession of Christ is the confession of the whole Trinity."¹⁰⁴²⁾ Why, then, artificially assert the "abbreviated expressions": "in the name of Jesus Christ," etc., in contrast to baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit?¹⁰⁴³⁾ Moreover, we know from the

 1040) Phil. 2:10. 11. 1041) 1 Cor. 12:3.

1042) *Systema. De bapt.*, p. 356. cf. the quotations from the Church Fathers in Gerhard, , *L. de bapt.*, § 91. RE.² XV, 242 ff. The ordinary remarks on the difference of prepositions are thus: εις expresses the relationship into which the baptized are placed: ἐπὶ and ἐν denote the basis upon which baptism is effected (Cremer): or: εις into, to fellowship, to property, ἐν, ἐπὶ on ground (Ebeling). But it goes without saying that; such general designations as: „in relation to", "on ground" or even like the popular "in the sphere of" etc. only gain their certain meaning through the context. If baptism on the ground of the name of Jesus Christ has with it the proximate designation εις αἰμεπιν των αμαρτιών, εις denotes the purpose or effect. Baptism is for the remission of sins; it is the medium of the remission of sins. Quite correctly Ebeling says that εις also designates 1 Cor. 12:13 the effect of baptism: ἐν ἐνὶ πνευματι πάντες ἡμεῖς εἰς ἐν σῶμα εβα.τρίσθημεν. Because baptism is the means of forgiveness of sins, it also implants into the spiritual body of the Church.

1043) Also Zöckler says in the commentary to Acts 2:38: "The baptismal formula used by the baptizing apostles was certainly the one prescribed by the Lord Matt. 28:19 (cf. for this also the Didache 7, 2. 3), not the mere mention of the name of JESUS, for which the ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰ. Χρ., v. 38, is quite improperly adduced by some."

apostles themselves were certain that they would not have baptized anyone who wanted to be baptized into Christ, but not into the Father and the Holy Spirit at the same time. This is evident from the fact that they consistently include the knowledge of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in one another, 2 Cor. 13:13: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all!"¹⁰⁴⁴) It has still been urged that the baptismal records in so far more and different beside Matt. 28:19 insofar as e.g. Acts 2:38 addresses the baptism from the names of Christ "for the forgiveness of sins". On the other hand, it must be remembered that the Matt. 28:19 is the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, the name of God who is merciful to sinners, and therefore baptism from the names of the Triune God is always baptism "for the remission of sins". The heathen, who know that there is one God but do not know the triune God revealed in God's Word, think of God as an angry God whom they have yet to reconcile through worship and sacrifice. Christians, on the other hand, who hold to the Christian concept of God, always think of the triune God as the God who is merciful to men for Christ's sake, that is, who forgives their sins.

Also within the Lutheran church the question has been discussed whether baptism "in the name of the Lord", "from the names of Jesus Christ" etc. is valid, if otherwise the confession of the Holy Trinity is expressed at baptism, but in a wording different from Matt. 28:19 different wording. Brenz assumes the following case: "If someone, after reciting the Apostolic Symbol in baptism, were to say to the baptized these words: I have therefore heard the confession of your faith from your mouth, that you believe in God the Father, Creator Almighty of heaven and earth, and in His only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit: upon this confession and out of this faith I immerse you in water, or sprinkle water on you, that by this sign you may know that you are grafted into Jesus Christ and into the fellowship of all

1044) Thus, Peter's sermon on Pentecost, Acts 2:14 ff, is a powerful sermon about the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Cf. 1 Cor. 8:4 ff; 12:1 ff; Gal. 4:4-7; Eph. 1:11-14; 3:2-5; 4:3-6; Tit. 3:4-7; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; 2 Pet. 1:16-21; 1 Jn. 2:22-24; 3:23-24; 4:2-3; 5:6-12 (also with omission of the critically challenged 7 b and 8 a.).

His possessions; go in peace!' This baptism would undoubtedly be a true baptism, because it contains what is necessary for baptism, and because the meaning of Christ's words is publicly expressed, although the sound of the words themselves seems to be somewhat altered." One will agree with Brenz that with this vigorous confession of the Holy Trinity in Baptism, Baptism should be recognized as a valid one. ¶ But here the remark is obvious that the assumed case will occur very rarely, especially since Brenz prefaces the words for practice: "It is to be noted that in baptism these common words: I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," and that no one should be allowed to use these words arbitrarily, or to use other words in baptism as he sees fit. For there are very important causes (*gravissimae causae*), the enumeration of which is superfluous here, why the use of these words should be carefully maintained" (*diligenter retinendus sit*).¹⁰⁴⁵⁾ Just think what erroneous thoughts of complete and less complete, even of "better" and "lesser" baptism easily arise when the words used for the application of water are changed *ad libitum*. Nevertheless, we also admit that a baptism which was performed in the manner described by Brenz would have to be recognized as a true baptism. We therefore agree with the judgment of the theologians, who firstly hold that the words in the command to baptize Matt. 28:19 is the most suitable, simplest and all disputation excluding "baptismal formula". "Christ had," says Deyling, "no doubt important causes for the sake of which he expressed the names of the individuals in this initiatory formula, and willed that they should also be expressly mentioned." ¹⁰⁴⁶⁾ But we also add, on the other hand, that a baptism performed "in the name of Jesus Christ" is to be recognized as valid if those so baptized are known as confessors of the Holy Trinity and express this at the baptism in the manner assumed by Brenz.¹⁰⁴⁷⁾

1045) *Catechismus pia et utili explicatione illustratus*. 1551, p. 56.

1046) *Pastor pastoralis*, p. 366.

1047) Thus Brenz, Scherzer, Deyling. The quotations in Walther, *Pastorale*, p. 110 ff. Gerhard, L. de bapt., § 91-93, speaks very intelligently and calmly about the whole matter. Luther expressed the opinion in 1520 in *De captivitate babylonica* (St. L. XIX, 61) that with words like Acts 2:38: "in the name of Jesus Christ" indicate the baptismal method (*ritus*) of the apostles.

A completely different question is what to think of the baptism of anti-Trinitarian fellowships when they use a Trinitarian baptismal formula. Already Augustine makes the remark that not many heretics are to be found who do not use the words prescribed in Matt. 28:19 at baptism.¹⁰⁴⁸⁾ The American Lutheran Church came in contact in several places with Free Protestant congregations who baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but publicly taught (even in their catechism) that Christ was not the Son of God, but an excellent man, and that the Holy Spirit was not God, but the Spirit of formation, etc. In this case, in spite of the orthodox formula, we did not recognize baptism as Christian baptism, because here there was a public explanation that one did not recognize Matt. 28:19 which was instituted by Christ. In this baptism not God's Word comes to the water (*ad elementum*), but a human thought, which is at the same time a mockery of the baptismal words of Christ. We consider the principle established by Walther to be correct:¹⁰⁴⁹⁾ "If a heretical pastor baptizes with the same sounds as orthodox preachers, but teaches publicly with his entire fellowship that he understands by Father a God who does not exist in three persons, by the Son of God a pure man, by the Holy Spirit the spirit of the age and of the Enlightenment, or only an alleged

be. Walther remarks (*Pastorale*, [p. 111](#)): "From this opinion, that the apostles baptized in this way, Luther seems later to have departed." Walther's judgment is confirmed by Luther's words of 1535 just quoted. Incidentally, that remark of Luther's is opposed to the erroneous view of those who do not recognize in baptism God's own work (a baptism "of the Holy Trinity itself by men"), but regard baptism as a performance in which a man, using certain words of God, "infuses grace" into the baptized. Therefore, in the same context, Luther also opposes the view of some scholastics that "there is a hidden spiritual power in the Word of God and water, which works the grace of God in the soul of the one who receives it," even without faith on the part of the baptized. Of course, that remark of Luther in *De captivitate Babylonica* gave the Romans a welcome opportunity to accuse Luther even of Arianism. Thus Bellarmine. Gerhard counters (*L. de baptismo*, § 90) Bellarmine's attack with the fact that church fathers, Roman teachers, and even Pope Nicholas I have spoken just as Luther did and are therefore nevertheless excused by Bellarmine. Luther, too, in his various adaptations of baptismal formularies, always gives only the instruction to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (Cf. the baptismal forms, [St. L. X, 2134-2149](#).)

1048) RE.² XV, 243. 1049) *Pastorale*, [p. 121](#).

attribute or effect of God, so that he does not baptize with those sounds into the Most Holy Trinity: such a heretical pastor baptizes not only without faith,¹⁰⁵⁰⁾ but also without God's Word; he keeps the sound of the same, but for the designation of a completely different sense. Therefore, the alleged baptism of all pastors of anti-Trinitarian fellowships is not to be recognized as a true baptism, just as a baptism for joking and mockery is not to be recognized, and those allegedly baptized by them are to be baptized first.¹⁰⁵¹⁾ Various reasons have been given that Unitarian baptism may be a true baptism after all, especially in the case when Christian parents fall into Unitarian fellowships out of ignorance. But to reckon with possibilities here does not want to do. Baptism is a serious matter. It is intended for practical use. The Christian should and wants to be comforted by his baptism. This means that the fact of baptism cannot be questioned. At least the baptism given within a Unitarian fellowship falls into the category of uncertain baptisms even in the case mentioned. With regard to all uncertain baptisms, however, the rule must be that they are to be treated practically as non-baptisms. It is in the nature of things, and experience confirms it, that uncertainty about the fact of baptism makes the use of baptism on the part of the baptized impossible.¹⁰⁵²⁾

4. The means of grace character of baptism. ^ (*Baptismal Grace*.)


Above all, it is necessary to clearly recognize and hold on to the grace-means character of Baptism. Baptism is nothing more and nothing less than a divinely ordained means by which God offers and appropriates to the baptized person in a special way the


1050) Walther, op. cit., p. 121: "To the essence of baptism belongs neither faith nor the right intention (*intentio*) of either the officiant or of the applicant for Baptism (Rom. 3:3), but only word and water." (X. 6., Art. VIII.)

1051) *Pastorale*, p. 123.

1052) The individual about uncertain baptisms in Walther, *Pastorale*, p. 124. Cf. the opinions of Luther about the baptism of foundlings and emergency baptisms without witnesses, St. L. X, 2130 ff. — To the uncertain baptisms are not to be counted the baptisms that were performed within the Papal Church and the Reformed fellowships, because both fellowships baptize with water in the name of the Triune God, thus in the matters that belong to the essence of baptism, nothing else. (Cf. Walther, *Pastorale*, p. 122.)

forgiveness of sins available through Christ's *satisfactio vicaria*. In other words, baptism is the medium of justification, *medium iustificationis sive remissionis peccatorum*. Baptism is not a work that we do to God, but that God does to us, namely, whereby "God offers and gives forgiveness of sins."¹⁰⁵³) Baptism, after all, does not belong to the Law, but to the Gospel.¹⁰⁵⁴) This has already had to be explained in the doctrines of grace, faith, justification, and in more detail in the doctrine of the means of grace. What was said earlier is to be summarized here and elaborated on. It can be clearly seen what baptism has in common with the mere word of the gospel. As by the word of the gospel sins are forgiven, so also baptism is means of forgiveness of sins, because the Scripture says that baptism is for the remission of sins,¹⁰⁵⁵) washes away sins,¹⁰⁵⁶) Christ cleanses His congregation by baptism¹⁰⁵⁷) etc. And as the word of the gospel, by presenting the forgiveness of sins, produces, or rather strengthens, faith, and is thereby a means of regeneration,¹⁰⁵⁸) so also baptism, by presenting the same grace, is a means of awakening and strengthening faith, and therefore likewise a bath of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁵⁹) What distinguishes Baptism as a means of grace from the word of the

 1053) Apol. 252, 18 [[Trigl. 389, Apol., XXIV, 18](#) Baptismus est opus, non quod nos Deo offerimus, sed in quo Deus nos baptizat, videlicet minister vice Dei, et hic offert et exhibet Deus remissionem peccatorum.

1054) Schmalk. Art., p. 319: "Vom Evangelium." [[Trigl. 491, Smalc. art., Part III, Art. IV](#) 

1055) Acts 2:38.

1056) Acts 22:16.

1057) Eph. 5:26

1058) 1 Pet. 1:23.



1059) Titus 3:5 The assertion that regeneration is only through baptism and not also through the word of the gospel had to be rejected as contrary to Scripture. — A difficulty was found in how, in the case of the baptism of adults who were already faithful and born again by faith before baptism, baptism still remained a bath of regeneration. The difficulty is no greater than with the word of the Gospel. Just as the word of the gospel retains and demonstrates its regenerating power when it is preached to believers and born-again believers beforehand, the same applies to baptism when it is administered to adults who were believers and thus born-again beforehand. For the preservation and strengthening of the rebirth, the same divine power is required that first worked the rebirth. The old Lutheran theologians are therefore concerned with this question because they were countered by the Reformers: "Sometimes those are baptized who were

Gospel is not merely the individual presentation and promise of the forgiveness of sins — this also happens through the word of the Gospel in private absolution — but it is peculiar to baptism that in it the individual promise of grace, which is made to the person, also becomes a "visible word", *verbum visibile*, through the application of the water to the person. As the Apology says:¹⁰⁶⁰ "For this purpose are the outward signs instituted, that thereby the hearts may be moved, that is, by the word and outward sign at the same time, that they may believe, when we are baptized ... that God will be truly gracious to us through Christ, as Paul says, Faith is of the hearing. But as the word entereth into the ears, so the outward sign is set before the eyes (*incurrit in oculos* [[Google](#)]), as stirring up and moving the heart inwardly to faith."

The doctrines of the grace-means character of baptism are erroneously taught by the Roman and Romanizing Lutherans as well as by the Reformed and the newer theologians who walk in Reformed paths.

According to the Roman opinion, baptism makes one partake of grace *ex opere operato*, that is, without the presence of faith on the part of the baptized to grasp the forgiveness of sins promised in Baptism. This is the opinion of which the Apology judges:¹⁰⁶¹ "This is a straight Jewish error (*iudaica opinio*), so they hold that we should be justified and sanctified by a work and outward ceremonies without faith. ... Therefore we say that to the right use of the sacraments belongs faith, believing to receive the divine promise and promised grace, which is offered by sacrament and word." The

already born again through the Word and the Holy Spirit, as can be seen from the example of the eunuch, Acts 8:38, and those on whom the Holy Spirit had already fallen before, Acts 10:47. Since for these baptism was not the means of regeneration, neither can baptism be said to have this purpose in the rest." Gerhard responds (*L. de sacram.*, § 123): "Although these and many others were truly born again before the use of baptism, nothing is thereby taken away from the efficacy of baptism, that it is and is called a bath of regeneration. This can be explained by the example of the divine Word, which is heard by many who were born again before; nevertheless, the Word is that salutary means by which we are born again as through the incorruptible seed, 1 Pet. 1:23; Jas. 1:18."

1060) 202, 5 [[Trigl 309, XIII, 5](#) 
[313, XIII, 18 f.](#) 

1061) 204, 18 ff. [[Trigl.](#)

Tridentinum not only excluded the scholastic doctrine, but also rejected the Christian doctrine with the addition of a curse. It states:¹⁰⁶²⁾ "If anyone says that through these same sacraments of the New Covenant grace is not given by virtue of work done (*ex opere operato*), but that faith alone in the divine promise is sufficient to receive grace, let him be accursed."¹⁰⁶³⁾ The specifically Roman doctrine of baptism has the purpose of separating the baptized from their baptism. Rome achieves this purpose primarily by doing a double thing. Once by the doctrine of the effect of baptism *ex opera operato*, without the faith that appropriates the forgiveness of sins. Thus personal Christianity, which consists in faith in the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, is made impossible. The doctrine that baptism *ex opera operato* completely eradicates original sin and that the remaining evil desire (*concupiscentia vel fomes*) is no longer sin also has this tendency.¹⁰⁶⁴⁾ Then Rome achieves the separation of the baptized from their baptism by not allowing those who have fallen from grace to return to baptismal grace, but by transferring them to the "second board" of Roman penance (*contritio cordis, confessio oris, satisfactio operis*).¹⁰⁶⁵⁾ The whole serves to keep alive the *monstrum incertitudinis gratiae*, on which the rule of the papacy over souls is founded. — Roman territory is also entered by the newer Lutherans, who address a binding with Christ, even a rebirth through baptism, without at the same time faith in the forgiveness of sins. The effect of baptism is thought of as a kind of natural effect or as the infusion of a matter for the reception of which faith is not necessary. Proponents of this view therefore maintain that even if the baptized have become unbelievers, they still remain members of Christ,¹⁰⁶⁶⁾ or

1062) Sess. VII, can. 8.

1063) When Tridentine *Sessio* VI, c. 7, calls baptism "the sacrament of faith," this is a deception. It understands by faith, as will be added shortly, not the faith that takes hold of the forgiveness of sins offered in baptism, but a faith that does not exist at all, namely, a faith to which love, that is, sanctification and good works, must be added if it is to bind one to Christ and make one a member of the Christian Church.

1064) *Tridentinum*, Sess. V, *De pecc. orig.* 5. *Catech. Rom.* II, 2, 32.

1065) *Tridentinum*, Sess. VI, c. 14; *Sess. XIV*, can. 2.

1066) Thus Franz Delitzsch, *Vier Bücher von der Kirche*, p. 43 sq. In Baier-Walther [III, 482](#).

that baptized persons, even if they never became faithful, nevertheless carry the spirit of Christ "imbued in them as a gift for their whole life".¹⁰⁶⁷⁾ Kattenbusch rightly calls this a "theosophical speculation".¹⁰⁶⁸⁾ On the basis of Scripture it must be stated that a rebirth without faith in the forgiveness of sins acquired through Christ is a *non-ens*. The Scriptures know only a rebirth which on the part of man is mediated by faith in Christ, that is, by faith in the forgiveness of sins acquired by Christ.¹⁰⁶⁹⁾ Thus, baptism is also a means of rebirth only in that it offers the forgiveness of sins and, through this offering, also awakens or strengthens faith. Furthermore, the view, which is very popular in the present day, that baptism first places one in the fellowship of the church or implants one in the "new humanity" and then, through membership in the church or by being implanted in the new humanity, makes one partaker of the forgiveness of sins, belongs to the Roman area. This view is Roman because it bases the forgiveness of sins or justification on membership in the Christian church or on being grafted into the new humanity instead of on the forgiveness of sins promised in baptism. It is true here what Dorner said at the time against von Hofmann: "So by at least principled sanctification we have reconciliation."¹⁰⁷⁰⁾ It is precisely the reverse relationship that is scriptural. Baptism first imparts *secundum ordinem causarum et effectuum* the forgiveness of sins or justification, that is, communion of grace with God, and thereby membership in the Christian Church. In short, when we speak of the grace-means character of baptism, or — what is the same thing — when we answer the question, "What does baptism give or profit?" it must be noted that the presentation of the forgiveness of sins and the effect set with it, respectively the strengthening of faith, is the first effect of baptism, to which all the other effects of baptism, such as the incorporation into the body of the Christian Church, being dead to sin and being alive to God, are merely related as fruit and consequence. We must not reverse this relationship if we are not to understand the

1067) Thus Thomasius, *Dogmatik* IV, 9. 1068) RE. ³ XIX, 422.

1069) Joh. 1:12-13; 3:5, 14-15; 1 Joh. 5:1.

1070) *Glaubenslehre* II, 587.

mix sanctification into justification. What we recognized as the scriptural relationship in the doctrine of justification, namely, that *unio mystica*, membership in the church, sanctification, etc., do not precede justification but follow it, the same relationship is repeated here in baptism, because baptism is *primo loco* a medium of justification, εις ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, for the forgiveness of sins, happens, Acts 2:38. The difference between the old Lutheran and the modern Lutheran doctrines of baptism can be determined thus: According to the doctrines of Luther and the Lutheran Confessions, the forgiveness of sins is the actual "main good" in baptism, which is why they do not want to know anything about an effect of baptism for salvation without faith on the part of the baptized. Here belongs Luther's dictum that he would also refrain from infant baptism if he had to consider that the children could not have faith of their own.¹⁰⁷¹⁾ Newer Lutherans, on the other hand, leave aside the forgiveness of sins through baptism and therefore also the means of reception, faith. They allow spiritual (or "spiritual-bodily") powers and goods to be communicated through baptism without faith being present on the part of the baptized as a means of reception. Therein lies the Romanizing of their doctrines.

According to Reformed doctrine, baptism is not at all the medium or *vehiculum* of the forgiveness of sins and the divine effect of grace, but only a symbol or image of the forgiveness of sins and regeneration, which the Holy Spirit is supposed to work somehow without the external word and sacraments, or yet only alongside them, that is, directly. The Lutheran doctrine is also explicitly rejected by the newer Reformed. Alexander Hodge¹⁰⁷²⁾ answers the question: "What is the Lutheran doctrine on this subject?" thus: "The Lutherans agreed with the Reformed churches in repudiating the Romish doctrine of the magical efficacy of this Sacrament as an *opus operatum*. But they went much further than the Reformed in maintaining the sacramental union between the sign and the grace signified. Luther in his Small Catechism says Baptism 'worketh forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and confers everlasting salvation on all who believe,' and that 'it is not the *water* indeed.

1071) St. L. XI, 490.

1072) Outlines, p. 500 sq.

which produces these effects, but the *word of God* which accompanies, and is connected with, the water, and our *faith*, which relies on the word of God connected with the water. For the water without the word is simply water and no baptism. But when connected with the word of God, it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration." ¶ If we wish to understand the controversy between the Lutherans and Reformed, the motives underlying the mutual position must be clearly recognized and recorded. What it was about is indicated in Luther's question in the Small Catechism, "How can water do such great things?" All the Reformed, from Zwingli on down to Böhl, deny that sin is forgiven and regeneration wrought by baptism, on the ground that baptism cannot do or work these things. Böhl says, "Water cannot do such high things." ¹⁰⁷³⁾ Luther's and the Lutheran Church's position is expressed in the well-known words of Luther: ¹⁰⁷⁴⁾ "If God would let thee take up a straw or pluck up a feather with such commandment, and promise, that thereby thou shouldest have forgiveness of all sin, His grace, and eternal life, shouldest thou not accept, love, and praise that with all joy and thankfulness, and therefore hold that same straw and feather higher holy, and let it be dearer to thee than heaven and earth is?" So it does not stand in question whether water is water. Luther and all Lutherans have always admitted that. In question stands only whether God commanded water baptism, attached to it the promise of forgiveness of sins, and thereby made it a medium of forgiveness of sins and a bath of rebirth and renewal of the Holy Spirit. Luther's words in the Small Catechism are perfectly sufficient also for the precise dogmatic formulation of the Scriptural doctrine of baptism. To the question, "What is baptism?" Luther answers, "Baptism is not merely simple (*simpliciter*) water, but it is water comprehended in God's command and bound with God's Word." And after Luther had quoted the divine command word Matt. 28:19: "Baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!" and the divine word of promise: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"

1073) [Dogmatics](#), p. 560.

1074) [St. L. XVI. 2296](#).

he asks: "How can water do such great things?" and answers: "Water certainly does not do it, but the Word of God, which is with and by the water, and faith, which trusts in such a Word of God in the water. For without the Word of God the water is simple water and no baptism. But with the Word of God it is a baptism, that is, a water of life rich in grace, and a bath of new birth in the Holy Spirit." The position of Luther and the Lutheran Church in the doctrine of baptism is thus perfectly clear. There can be no doubt why the Lutheran Church says these great things of baptism: "It works forgiveness of sins, saves from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe it, according to the words and promises of God." To be sure, Zwingli now says that he never read in Scripture (*neque unquam legimus in Scripturis sacris*) that the sacraments — and he refers this specifically to baptism — bring about and dispense grace.¹⁰⁷⁵ But Zwingli is deceiving himself. Zwingli has read in Scripture — just as Luther did — that baptism is for the forgiveness of sins, washes away sins, that Christ purifies His Church through baptism, that baptism is a bath of regeneration, that baptism brings salvation, and so on. But Zwingli does not believe these Words of God. There is a clear case of unbelief in him towards the clear Word. His real and only reason is that he considers the matter incredible, that is, that he sets his Zwinglian ego against the authority of the Word of God. So all the Reformed to this day. So also Böhl. Böhl proceeds with a certain naiveté and openness. He refers to the scriptural passages which say of baptism that it washes away sins, cleanses from sins and works regeneration (Acts 22:16; Eph. 6:26; Tit. 3:6), but then adds: "Water cannot do such high things."¹⁰⁷⁶ He simply counters the words of Scripture with his Böhlian no. The difference between the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in regard to the doctrine of baptism is fully adequately indicated by the fact that the former believes God's Word concerning baptism, the latter does not. With a great effort of unbelief toward the clear Word of God, the Reformed doctrine of baptism was raised by Zwingli and comrades and

1075) *Fidei Ratio*. Niemeyer, p. 24. 25.

1076) Dogmatics, p. 558. 560.

propagated by Calvin.. The Reformed doctrine, according to which baptism is only a symbol, image, emblem, etc. of the forgiveness of sins and rebirth, lacks any support in Scripture. Pastor Feine correctly refers:¹⁰⁷⁷⁾ "everywhere baptism is presented as the mediator of real, objective effects; it is not merely a symbol or a representational symbolic act. The series of thoughts of justification and forgiveness of sins are clearly and firmly bound up with baptism. Likewise, baptism is firmly connected with the doctrines of faith, communion of life with Christ, and infilling with the Spirit." Feine proves this by the same scriptural statements that are also cited by Luther and the old theologians to justify the Lutheran doctrine of baptism, namely Eph. 5:26; Tit. 3:5;¹⁰⁷⁸⁾ Acts 22:16; 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21. We still especially point out that just as the forgiveness of sins and regeneration occurs through baptism as a means (*medium remissionis peccatorum et regenerationis*), so also the incorporation into the spiritual body of Christ, namely into the church, is wrought by the Holy Spirit through baptism, not merely imaged. It is said in 1 Cor. 12:13: "By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body," εν ενί πνεύματι ημείς πάντες εις εν σώμα εβαπτισθημεν.¹⁰⁷⁹⁾ Also sanctification, the death of the old man and the resurrection to a new life, is through baptism not merely

1077) RE. ³ XIX, 400.

1078) In the first edition of Meyer's *Commentary* it had been remarked on Tit. 3:5: "Baptism is regarded as the inner new birth of man manifesting itself in the outward act of the bath." This Huther disavows in the third edition, saying, "The expression τό λοντρόν παλιγγενεσίας has been interpreted very arbitrarily by the expositors, in part, by taking as a figurative designation of the *regeneratio* itself, or of the *praedicatio evangelii*, or of the Holy Spirit, or of the abundant distribution of the same. According to Eph. 5:26 nothing else than baptism can be understood by this. According to the context, Paul calls baptism the bath of regeneration neither in this sense that it obligates to regeneration (Matthies), nor also in the sense that it symbolizes regeneration (de Wette); for neither in that nor in this sense could it be considered the means of salvation (εσωσεν ήμάς διά), but he calls it by that name the bath by means of which God really procures the regeneration of man.

1079) As the εις Acts 2:38 denotes the purpose and effect of baptism: "Let every man be baptized for the (εις) remission of sins," so also here: "We were baptized into one body (εις εν σώμα)."

signified but wrought by baptism. Rom. 6:1-11 Paul takes that the Christians are dead to sin, alive to God. But this is mediated by baptism (δια τον βαπτισμότος). Sanctification both according to its negative side (dead to sin) and according to its positive side (alive to God in Jesus Christ JEsu) is a *status quo* created by baptism. Böhl miraculously interprets that in baptism the old man is killed only "*in effigie*".¹⁰⁸⁰⁾ This, of course, agrees with Böhl's doctrine of baptism, according to which baptism also forgives sins only *in effigie*. Baptism, says Böhl, is only signum absolutionis peccatorum. But this does not agree with Scripture. According to Scripture, baptism is not merely an image, *effigies*, but a means of forgiveness of sins. So also the killing of the old man and the resurrection of the new, holy man is not merely pictured in baptism, but wrought. According to Christian doctrine, there is truly no other means of killing the old man or dying to sin than the forgiveness of sins or the gospel. The law does not kill sin in man, but only makes it mobile.¹⁰⁸¹⁾ On the other hand, it is said of the gospel or forgiveness of sins, "Sin shall not be able to have dominion over you, because ye are not under the law, but under grace."¹⁰⁸²⁾ Now as certainly as baptism belongs to the gospel, that is, is the means of forgiveness of sins, washing away of sins, cleansing of sins, etc., so certainly in baptism the old man is not merely put to death "*in effigy*," but in baptism he himself, the old man, is given life. And this is precisely what Paul says of baptism Rom. 6:3 ff: συνετάφημεν αὐτῷ (namely, with Christo) διὰ τον βαπτισμότος εἰς τον θάνατον. Luther also addresses the meaning of baptism,¹⁰⁸³⁾ but in a sense opposite to the Reformed "meaning" (*effigies*). According to Luther, baptism itself works what it means, namely, the drowning of the old man and the coming forth of the new. Luther says of baptism that it "not only indicates such new life, but also works, raises and drives it; for in it" (in baptism) "grace, spirit and power are given to suppress the old man, so that the new

1080) Dogmatics, p. 556 ff.


1081) Rom. 7:5. 6.

1082) Rom. 6:14.

1083) Small Catech. p. 362, 12. [Trigl. 551, 12

one comes forth and becomes strong."¹⁰⁸⁴⁾ When A. von Öttingen says of baptism that it includes in itself, as it were, the "death sentence" on the old man,¹⁰⁸⁵⁾ the "as it were" is to be deleted. In the midst of Christianity it must always be remembered that sanctification always occurs only as a consequence of the forgiveness of sins or justification, and that therefore we can also speak of a power of baptism working sanctification only when baptism does not merely forgive or justify sins "*in effigie*" but really does so. We can rely on this: Where God, as in baptism, promises his grace, that is, the forgiveness of sins, and faith takes hold of this promise, there *eo ipso* the old man is put to death and the new man is called into life. That this process is still repeated daily is due to the fact that faith is not yet perfect, but unbelief is still found in the Christian alongside faith throughout life. Thus, for the practical use of baptism, everything depends on our understanding baptism not as an image or *effigy* of grace, but as a means of grace. Incidentally, the Reformed have no right to call baptism even an "image" or "seal" of grace. Baptism knows only of a grace which it itself offers and appropriates. Therefore, baptism does not seal and confirm the grace that is supposedly directly given and wrought, but declares it to be spurious. But this was explained in detail earlier in the doctrine of the means of grace.¹⁰⁸⁶⁾ There it was also already demonstrated that between Zwingli and Calvin an essential difference neither exists nor is even possible.¹⁰⁸⁷⁾ Finally, it always stands that all those who deny baptism as a means of forgiveness of sins and regeneration cannot avoid grasping baptism with Zwingli merely as an "obligatory symbol". If practiced differently by Reformed, it is a "happy inconsistency."

But we finally recall one thing here. Although in the Reformed doctrine of baptism there is a quite obvious

 1084) Large Catech., p. 497, 75 [*Trigl. 751, Large Cat., Inf. Bap., 75* ]. Ibid, p. 495, 65: "These two matters: sinking under the water and coming out again, indicate the power and work of baptism (*virtutem et opus baptismi*), which is nothing else than the killing of the old Adam, then the resurrection of the new man, both of which are to go on in us throughout our lives."

1085) *Luth. dogmatics II, II, 431*. 1086) *II, 185 ff.*

1087) *II, 193 ff.*

contradiction against God's Word, we must not deceive ourselves with regard to the seductive character of the objection: "Water is water and cannot possibly do such great things". Unbelief toward God's Word and work is innate in all men. Consequently, even though God has added His Word to the water in baptism, man nevertheless instinctively regards it as simple water (Luther drastically: "with cow's eyes"¹⁰⁸⁸) ; that is, man instinctively ignores the added "in the Word" (εν ρήματι) in the "water bath" (ὁ λουτρόν τον ὕδατος). Therefore, the axiom of unbelief, "Water baptism cannot wash away sins, but the Spirit must do it," finds fertile ground not only with the world, but also with Christians, provided they follow their natural way. The deniers of the grace-means character of baptism are further helped by the fact that many who have received baptism as children or even as adults do not prove to be Christians. From this it is believed that baptism is not a medium of forgiveness of sins and rebirth. Very persistently, as we have often been confronted with, the argument is repeated: many who hear the word of the Gospel do not become believing and saved, and many who have been baptized live godless lives and are lost. Therefore, the external word of the Gospel and water baptism cannot be means of grace, but "efficacious grace acts immediately", "Nothing intervenes between the volition of the Spirit and the regeneration of the soul". This is, of course, a foolish argument. Those who argue in this way should then, above all, refrain from speaking and writing themselves. For if the Holy Spirit does not come through the Word of God and through the divine order of baptism, much less will it come through Muenzer's, Zwingli's, Calvin's, "Gypsy" Smith's word, or through the human orders of class and camp meetings. But to think and act consistently is not in the natural nature of man after the fall. He is prevented from doing so by the conceit and effect of the arch-enemy of the Church, who wants to discredit God's order, the means of grace, and to base the forgiveness of sins and salvation, instead of on God's grace in Christ, on human self-acting under the label "Spirit." This is why the polemic against baptism as a means of grace makes such

1088) St. L. VII, 702.

a great impression on the secular and ecclesiastical public, and that is why we cannot avoid constantly presenting the thetical and antithetical character of baptism as a means of grace in the home and in the church, and especially in theological instruction.¹⁰⁸⁹⁾

1089) The daily press of St. Louis published the following report a few years ago about the activities of a revivalist: "Baptism won't save you. Evangelist says being among God's people is not enough. 'You are not going to be saved by joining the church, by being baptized, or by taking the Lord's Supper, or by doing anything of this sort,' Evangelist W. R. Newell declared yesterday morning at the Century Theater noonday service. 'If you become a Christian, you will want to do those things, but goats get in among the sheep. It does not save you to get in among God's people.'" So we have today and in our environment the same situation that Luther describes with the words (X, 2060 ff.): "It is the wretched devil's deceitfulness that mimics and teases the people with such clamor: 'Do you not see that water is water?' What good is the water that even the cow drinks for the soul and washes away sin? With this the mouth of the rash rabble is shut, so that it falls shut and says: 'This is true! Oh, how the devil has beguiled me, that I have not seen and perceived this! This is what they call a precious, righteous doctrine and the high art of the spirit, when they can say only this much: Water is water. And yet the poor people are so mischievously deceived by such talk, because they puff up such things with many splendid words and great clamor, which they pretend, as if we teach that water as water bathes the soul. O dear, they say, do not believe that at all; for there you see how they deceive you, that you should trust and rely on mere water, as a creature. But these are called desperate traitors and evildoers, who tear the baptism, separate and cut the two best main matters of it, namely God's Word and command, and leave us nothing but a dead shell or husk; will not hear nor see how we drift always and most of all on the said two matters, by and beside the water, and afterward scrape against us with the bare one piece, and proclaim such for special art and spirit. Dear, I would be so wise and learned, yes, any farmer at the plow, without all art, if that should apply, so out of their own iniquity separate and tear apart what belongs together and is one being. ... For this thou must confess, that Christ himself hath instituted such baptism, and hath added his word or commandment thereto, saying, He baptizeth us in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and hath promised that whosoever believeth and is baptized shall be saved. You do not have to put such things out of our sight and snatch them away, as if they should not apply and do, and meanwhile point to the land of milk and honey and pretend to your own dreamed-up spirituality. For we also know and teach such things, praise God, more and better than they, what the Holy Spirit works in us. But we should not let him be torn away from baptism and the sacrament and instead let him be shown into an isolated corner, as they stare at the spirit and seek secret revelation

Within the Lutheran Church, there have been discussions about whether or not to address a *materia coelestis* binding the application of water at baptism. Baier added a lengthy dogma-historical treatise on this to his Compendium.¹⁰⁹⁰ Quenstedt reports that the Lutheran theologians do not express themselves in the same way about this and call it *materia coelestis*: Word of God, the Holy Spirit, Christ's blood, the Holy Trinity. For his own person Quenstedt adds: "We hold with Menzer, Meisner, Affelmann, Gerhard, Brochmand, Calov and others that the heavenly thing (*rem coelestem*) is the most Holy Trinity."¹⁰⁹¹ To this it is to be said: Admittedly, everything mentioned, although in different respects, is at baptism. Word of God, the Word of command and the Word of promise, is there as that which makes the application of water baptism (*forma baptismi*). The Holy Spirit is there because, through baptism, He works the rebirth.

apart from the Word of God and God's order. For we know that he wants to work with us through word and sacrament and not in any other way. Therefore, when we have this sacrament of baptism, we must not inquire further about the Spirit, because we hear from Christ's word and institution that the Holy Spirit, together with the Father and the Son, that is, the whole divine majesty, is named in it. But because the name and Word of God are in it, you must not consider it plain and empty water, which does no more than the water of a bath, but such water as washes us from sins, and, as the Scripture calls it, a bath of regeneration, by which we are born again into eternal life, of which we shall hereafter hear further. Enough has been said to answer those who think that baptism is only a bodily water bath and pay no attention to either the Word or the divine command. ... So far enough has been said about what baptism is and what power and benefit it has. Now it should also be said of its custom or of those who receive it. For here there is a division and inequality, that not all receive the same power and benefit of baptism, even though they received the same baptism. For there are two kinds of people who receive it: some with faith and some without faith. Therefore, although baptism is right in itself, and remains holy and divine to one as well as to another, to the unbeliever as well as to the one who believes, yet there is a great difference among them, that the unbeliever cannot enjoy its power and benefits. This is not the fault of baptism, but of himself, that he does not receive and use it as he ought; the vessel is not fitted to receive it; for the heart is shut up, that the power of baptism cannot enter into it and work in it; for it neither desires nor wants it."

1090) See Baier-Walther III, 447 ff.

1091) *Systema* II, 1085.

The blood of Christ is there because the forgiveness of sins, which takes place through baptism, is not acquired with gold or silver, but through the shed blood of Christ. The Holy Trinity is present because not only is baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity, but Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are also present in a special way wherever the means of grace are administered. It is also the teaching of Scripture that the entire Holy Trinity dwells in the heart of every believer. Nevertheless, it is not advisable to speak of a materia coelestis in baptism, if only because the Holy Spirit, the Blood of Christ, and the Holy Trinity are also present in the sermon of the Gospel.¹⁰⁹² There is therefore, in substance, no specific of baptism. Hollaz therefore remarks that here the word *materia coelestis* is taken in a "wider sense:" "Actually speaking (*stricte loquendo*), neither the Holy Spirit nor the Holy Trinity can be or be called a material cause (*causa materialis*)."¹⁰⁹³ So it is advisable to say, with Baier and others, "We refrain from speaking of a *materia coelestis* in this sacrament" (namely, baptism)."

1092) When Luther says that baptism "is water mixed with the blood of Christ," or that in baptism "the rose-colored, innocent blood of Christ appears and is seen" (VII, 707), he was in no way thinking of a *unio sacramentalis* between the water and the blood of Christ, analogous to the sacramental binding between bread and wine and the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, but Luther wanted to inculcate that the fruit of Christ's shed blood, namely the forgiveness of sins, is offered through baptism. This is how he explains himself. He says: "This holy baptism is purchased for us by the same blood which he shed for us and paid for sin. ... For we do not obtain forgiveness of sins by our works, but by the death and shedding of blood of the Son of God. But such forgiveness he takes and puts into baptism." Luther says in the same context that the blood of Christ is also bound up with the sermon of the gospel: "Sprinkling [with the blood of Christ] is nothing else than preaching. Consecrating or sprinkling water is the Holy Scriptures. The pastor's or Christian's tongue is the sprinkling water. He dips it into the Lord Christ's rose-colored blood and sprinkles it on the people, that is, he preaches the gospel to them, which reads: that Christ has acquired forgiveness of sins through his dear blood, which he shed on the cross for all the sins of the world. Whoever believes it is sprinkled with it."

1093) *Examen, De bapt., qu. 7.*

5. The use of baptism. [^]

Baptism, which is to be administered only once, is to be used by Christians throughout their lives. Nowhere do the apostles call for the repetition of baptism, but they diligently remind Christians of the baptism they received earlier.¹⁰⁹⁴⁾ This reminder is both for comfort and for admonition. Gal. 3:26-27 Paul reminds us that Christians have put on Christ through baptism, that is, without law, through faith in Christ, they have become children of God.¹⁰⁹⁵⁾ Rom. 6:3 ff. Paul uses baptism as a reminder, instructing Christians that through baptism they have become dead to sin and alive to life in righteousness. In a special way Peter presents 1 Pet. 3:21 puts the comfort of baptism in the light by saying: As Noah and his were saved by the water of the flood, so the water of baptism saves, that is, makes blessed (σώζει βάπτισμα), reasoning, that the water of baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh (ον σαρκός ἀπόθεσις ρηου), but the covenant of a good conscience with God, συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς θεόν. At this point it comes to the statement that baptism involves the establishment of a covenant of grace between God and the person of the baptized.¹⁰⁹⁶⁾ Rightly, therefore, the daily


1094) 1 Cor. 1:13; 6:11; 12:13; Rom. 6:3 ff; Eph. 4:5; Col. 2:12; Tit. 3:5; 6; 1 Pet. 3:21.

1095) On the "evangelical attraction" to Christ through faith as distinguished from the attraction to Christ through discipleship in life ("ethical" attraction), cf. Luther on this passage [IX, 464 f.](#); also Meyer on this passage

1096) The meaning of ἐπερώτημα is known to be disputed. The word occurs only in this passage in the New Testament. Two meanings are registered from the profanity. The first and next meaning is: question, inquiry, *interrogatio*. From this, however, the meaning contract, *stipulatio* has developed in later Greek in judicial usage. (Cf. Cremer in the dictionary.) Those who here take ἐπερώτημα to mean "inquiry," with some variations of the thought, understand the passage to mean that in baptism the baptized inquire or ask of God for a good conscience. This view is excluded here because, according to the context, there is a statement about what baptism itself is, not about what those to be baptized or baptized do at baptism. Therefore, one cannot but stick to Luther's view: baptism is the covenant of a good conscience towards God (εἰς θεόν). Correctly Stöckhardt on this passage: "The first part of the apposition: baptism 'is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh' demands a continuation like this:

repentance of Christians (*poenitentia stantium*) is called a daily return to baptism or to the baptismal covenant, in that those who are in faith recognize themselves daily as sinners, take hold by faith of the forgiveness of sins promised in baptism, and thus, comforted, seek righteous fruits of repentance in a new life. Also, the repentance of the apostates (*poenitentia lapsorum*) does not consist in seizing the "second board" (*secunda tabula*) of papist penance, but in returning to baptism (*reditus ad baptismum*), namely, returning to the grace promised in baptism.¹⁰⁹⁷⁾ We must also be careful not to let confirmation take the place of baptism, because especially in our time, even in Lutheran circles, there has been a tendency to elevate confirmation at the expense of baptism. In Walther's *Pastorale*¹⁰⁹⁸⁾ there is the following reminder concerning this aberration: "The pastor must be careful not to present confirmation as an act that supplements and perfects the baptism received in unconscious childhood, as

but rather baptism is an inward purification of man, a cleansing, washing away of the conscience from sins, or, which is the same thing, procures for him who is baptized a good conscience before God." Baptism here, as Acts 2:38; 22:16; Eph. 5:26, as a means of forgiveness of sins. This is also evident from the addition, "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (δι' ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). Baptism applies the forgiveness of sins, which was actually declared on the part of God, as existing for all men, through Christ's resurrection from the dead.

1097) Luther's Large Catechism, M. 497, 79 ff. [*Trigl. 751, Large Cat., Inf. Bap., 79* ship does not break, because, as has been said, it is God's order and not ours, but this does happen, that we slip and fall out; but if anyone falls out, let him see that he swims over again and holds to it until he comes in again and walks in it, as begun before." Cf. here also Chemnitz, *Examen, De bapt. p. m. 241 sqq.*

1098) S. 266.

if, for example, the confirmand had to make the confession and vows pronounced by the godparents his own. Rather, the act of confirmation should serve above all to remind both the confirmands and the entire congregation present of the glory of the baptism already received in childhood. To give confirmation a sacramental character is one of the not so rare aberrations of those who want to be considered strictly Lutheran-churchly. Compare the review of an essay from Vilmar's 'Pastoral Theological Papers', which, taken from the 'Eranger Zeitschrift', is found in [Lehre und Wehre, Jahrg. VIII, pp. 110-116.](#)

6. The object of baptism. [△]

The object of baptism is both adults and children. But both classes are described in more detail in the Scriptures. Only those adults are to be baptized who have previously come to faith in Christ. Of those baptized on the first Pentecost it is said: "Those who gladly accepted his word were baptized."¹⁰⁹⁹⁾ And when the eunuch, after having received instruction from Philip, desired baptism, it was done for him according to his desire, after he had confessed his faith in Christ.¹¹⁰⁰⁾ As for the children, we dare not snatch the underage children from their parents for the purpose of baptism or baptize them secretly.¹¹⁰¹⁾ But we baptize the children who are brought to us by those who have parental power over them.¹¹⁰²⁾ The scriptural nature of infant baptism comes from the combination of scriptural passages such as Mark. 10:13-16 and Col. 2:11-12. From the former passage a double point emerges: 1. that even little children — Luke calls them τὰ βρέφη¹¹⁰³⁾ — are to be brought to Christ; 2. that even little children are capable of spiritual blessing and are indeed members in the kingdom of God. Their ability consists not in a future but in a present faith, that is, in a faith which the children have in infancy,¹¹⁰⁴⁾ and their membership in

1099) Acts 2:41.

1100) Acts 8:36-38.

1101) This is known to be Roman practice. Cf. Baumgarten, *Theol. Streitigkeiten* III, 311.

1102) Cf. the detailed treatment of the question of who has parental power over the children in Walther's *Pastorale*, [pp. 125](#) ff.

1103) Luke 18:15.

1104) Matt. 18:6; 1 John 2:13.

the church does not consist in an "expectation of the kingdom of God", but in the present possession of it.¹¹⁰⁵⁾ Col. 2:11-12 states that baptism took the place of the Old Testament circumcision and is therefore the means of grace for the children.¹¹⁰⁶⁾ The opposition against infant baptism is mostly based on the strange¹¹⁰⁷⁾ opinion that the elderly can believe, but not the children. The fact that children can have their own faith has already been explained in the doctrine of faith under the section "The Faith of Children"¹¹⁰⁸⁾ and is to be taken up again under the section "Baptismal Customs", namely in the point whether in infant baptism the question of faith is to be addressed to the godparents or to the child. It has been objected to infant baptism that it is nowhere expressly mentioned in Scripture. From this it has been concluded that infant baptism was not in use in the apostolic church. The opposite conclusion is in any case equally justified: Infant baptism is not yet expressly mentioned in Scripture because it is to be taken for granted, especially since Scripture records that whole families were baptized,¹¹⁰⁹⁾ which are hard to think of without children, that Christ purifies "His congregation," of which, according to His own explanation, children form a part,¹¹¹⁰⁾ by the water-bath in the Word,¹¹¹¹⁾ and Paul declares baptism to be the antitype of circumcision.¹¹¹²⁾ Church history stands that infant baptism was in general use in the second century. "Tertullian testifies to the existence of infant baptism by disapproving of it."¹¹¹³⁾ Origen testifies to it as an apostolic tradition.¹¹¹⁴⁾ — In the doctrine of baptism is

1105) Mark. 10:14.

1106) Calov on this passage: *Sacramentum baptismi Christus surrogatum voluit circumcisioni.*

1107) Matt. 18:3; Mark. 10:14-15. 1108) II, 537 f.

1109) 1 Cor. 1:16; Acts 11:14; 16:15, 33.

1110) Matt. 18:6; Mark. 10:13-16.

1111) Eph. 5:26.

1112) Col. 2:11-12.

1113) Hase, *Ev. Dogmatik*, p. 432.

1114) *In Epist. ad Rom, V: Ecclesia ab apostolis traditionem accepit etiam parvulis baptismum dare.* Bretschneider, in his criticism of "the church doctrine of infant baptism", finds "several things that let us expect that infant baptism is according to Jesus' will and the spirit of his religion. The command Matt. 28:19 is quite general. ... Also, the apostles could extend the command of Jesus all the more to the children, since also in

also the question that has been raised as to how the salvation of Christian children who die unbaptized stands. We have reason to believe that God has a way, not revealed to us, of working faith in the Christian children who die without baptism, as was certainly the case with the children of the female generation in the Old Testament.¹¹¹⁵⁾ With respect to the children of the heathen, we dare not say this. We are entering here the territory of the inscrutable judgments of God."¹¹¹⁶⁾

The baptism of bells and other res inanimatae is, of course, a mockery of Christian baptism.¹¹¹⁷⁾ Baptism of the dead seems to have been in use among some heretics.¹¹¹⁸⁾

the ancient economy, the act of initiation, circumcision, was performed on children. If according to Acts 16:15. 33; 18:8; 1 Cor. 1:16 whole families, and indeed all who belonged to them (Acts 16:33), were baptized, it is likely that the apostles did not exclude children if some were in these families. ... Jesus Himself blesses according to Mark. 10:14 f.; Matt. 19:15 f.; Luke 18:15 f. he blesses the children by laying hands on them and declared them fit to become members of the kingdom of God. Therefore, we will always fulfill Jesus' will more surely if we receive the children into the fellowship of the Christian church through baptism than if we do not. Even the oldest church, as we already see from Tertullian, used to baptize the children, which would not have happened if the apostles had refused baptism to the children." (Dogmatik der ev.-luth. K. II, 649 ff.)

1115) Mark. 10:13-16. 1116) Rom. 11:33.

1117) Quenstedt II, 1092. Luther (VII, 704): "Dear, where and who is the founder who called such? Do you also have a Word or command of God, which says: You shall consecrate salt or water and speak such words about it? Where there is no such word, there is and is not anything that is needed for signs and words, so that even baptism without this would not be a sacrament, although both water and word spoken over it would be there. How the papacy deceives with such false lying baptism, that they consecrate and baptize the dead bells, since both, water and word, are also used, as in the right baptism. What is lacking in this? Nothing else but this matter, that there is no God's foundation and command, who has ordered and ordained such things, but men have instituted such things of their own discretion. Just as the whole papacy is vain human doctrine and their own trumpery. Therefore, such baptisms are not a sacrament, but a loud perversion, even a mockery and blasphemy of baptism."

1118) Cf. Gerhard, *L. de bapt.*, § 165, and Cremer on βαπτίζειν. On 1 Cor. 15:29: "baptism over (υπέρ) the dead," see L. u. W. 1884, pp. 413 f.; also Gerhard loc. cit. and Cremer on βαπτίζειν. On the local meaning of υπέρ see Winer, Grammatik des neutest. Sprachidiom 6, p. 342.

7. The subject of baptism, or who should be baptized. ^

Like all spiritual goods, the means of grace, including baptism, belong directly, that is, not only through the mediation of a pastorate, to the believers, that is, to all Christians. That pastors administer baptism, they do in public office as called ministers (*ministri*) of the believers. If public ministers are not available, every Christian is not only entitled but also obligated to administer baptism. Our St. Louis hymnal therefore provides three forms (one longer, one shorter, and one quite short) for "lay baptism" in the appendix.¹¹¹⁹⁾ According to Calvin's¹¹²⁰⁾, the Calvinists absolutely reject lay baptism, and especially baptism by women, and maintain that baptism can only be administered by called pastors.¹¹²¹⁾ Alting gives the real reason for this strange position when he not only says that women who perform "emergency baptism" arrogate to themselves the public church office (*involant in ministerium ecclesiasticum*), but also adds: "They attach eternal salvation to an external thing, because they think it is done with the child if death occurs before water baptism; they do not know that the salvation of children depends on the grace of election and the covenant."¹¹²²⁾ Underlying this, then, is the rejection of the means of grace as "external things" in general, and then the fiction of election detached from the means of grace. Incidentally, when Calvinists assure us that the

1119) Incidentally, a Christian should be able to baptize properly even without a printed and read form, having impressed upon his memory the few words that belong to the consummation of baptism: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

1120) *Inst. IV, 15, 20: Neque aut mulieribus aut hominibus quibuslibet mandavit Christus ut baptizarent, sed quos apostolos constituerat, iis mandatum hoc dedit.* [Google] The restriction of the baptismal command to the apostles is contrary to v. 20: "I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Next, Calvin proves too much. If the command to baptize concerned only the apostles, then the administration of baptism and the doctrines in general would also have to be limited to the persons of the apostles, which of course Calvin himself does not want.

1121) Quoted in Heppe, *Dogmatik der ref. K., p. 446*; Quenstedt II, 1115 sqq.; *Günther, Symbolik, p. 295* f.. Lay baptism is also rejected in the second Helvetic Confession, XX, Niemeyer x. 518; likewise in the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterians, chap. XXVII, 4: "There be only two sacraments ordained of Christ ... neither of which may be dispensed by any but by a minister of the Word, lawfully ordained."

1122) *Syllabus Controversiarum etc., p. 263*; in Quenstedt II, 1115.

baptism performed by laymen has no power at all (*baptismi nullam vim esse*),¹¹²³⁾ it must be remembered that according to consistently held Calvinist doctrine, the means of grace, including baptism, have no power at all, but only represent what the Holy Spirit works directly in the elect.

8. The necessity of baptism. ^

Although baptism is not an adiaphoron, but a divine order, it must not be ascribed to itself an absolute necessity in the sense that no one has forgiveness of sins and can be saved who has not received baptism. We already saw in the doctrine of the means of grace that all the means of grace have the same purpose and the same effect, namely, the presentation of the forgiveness of sins and the production and strengthening of faith thereby effected. "It does not stand that the forgiveness of sins comes for the first third by the word of the gospel, for the second third by baptism, and for the third third by the Lord's Supper," but "Scripture ascribes the forgiveness of sins without any limitation both to the word of the gospel and to baptism, as well as to the Lord's Supper."¹¹²⁴⁾ Therefore, whoever has come to believe in the gospel has forgiveness of sins and salvation, even if he was not baptized due to some circumstances. This is the doctrine of the old Lutheran theologians, preceded by Luther.¹¹²⁵⁾

1123) Thus Chamier, *De baptismo* V, 14, 8; in Quenstedt II, 1116.

1124) p. 127 f.

1125) St. L. XI, 984: "Christ lets it suffice that in the first matters of this passage he says: 'He who believes and is baptized' and in the second: 'But he who does not believe does not repeat the baptism, of course because he indicated enough with the first one and commanded it further elsewhere than Matt. 28:19: 'Teach all the heathen and baptize them in the name of the Father' etc. And it does not follow from this that baptism should be dispensed with, or that it should be enough, that anyone should pretend that he has faith and should not be baptized. For whoever becomes a Christian and believes will certainly gladly accept such a sign, so that he may have both such divine testimony and confirmation of his salvation with him, and may strengthen and comfort himself with it in his whole life, and that he may also publicly confess this before all the world. ... Although it may happen that one may also believe, even though he is not baptized; and again some take baptism, who nevertheless do not truly believe. Therefore, this text must be understood as commanding and confirming baptism, which is not to be despised, but to be used, as has been said; and yet not so tight that anyone should be condemned who could not

Quenstedt, in a detailed exposition, opposes the Fathers of the Church, the Scholastics, and the later Roman doctrines, which assert an absolute necessity of baptism.¹¹²⁶ In order to make the matter somewhat less terrible, the papists allow the children who died without baptism to be punished only negatively (*poena damni*), not positively (*poena sensus*), that is, they assume that the children who died without baptism are deprived of the sight of God, but do not feel any torment. — Those who teach an absolute necessity of baptism refer especially to John 3:5: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." But the scopus of this passage is the punishment of the Pharisees and scribes who did not want to enter into God's way that was valid at that time and despised the baptism of John, while the tax collectors repented and were baptized.¹¹²⁷ Thus the account in Luke 7:29-30 reads: "All the people who heard him [John] and the tax collectors approved of God and were baptized. But the Pharisees and scribes despised God's counsel (τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ) against themselves and would not be baptized by him." In reference to this contempt of the baptism of John, and thus of the counsel of God unto salvation, Christ speaks to Nicodemus, who was indeed "a man among the Pharisees":¹¹²⁸ "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." In an analogous case, we too would have to say to a despiser of Christ's baptism, "Unless one is baptized, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." Luther and the Lutheran theologians appropriate Augustine's word:

come to baptism. ... It is always kept in harmony that if someone believes and yet dies unbaptized, he is not condemned for it: for it may happen that someone believes and, even though he desires baptism, is precipitated by death.

1126) *Systema* II, 1166 sq. Alexander Hodge (*Outlines*, p. 502) does not present the matter correctly when he answers the question, "What is the Romish and *Lutheran* doctrine as to the necessity of baptism?": "They hold that the benefits conveyed by baptism are ordinarily conveyed in no other way, and consequently, baptism is absolutely necessary in order to salvation, both for infants and adults."

1127) This is especially stated by Dannhauer, *Hodosophia, Phaen. X, 504: Scopus particularis colloquii Christi est elencticus Pliarisaismi contemnentis consilium Dei de baptismo*. [[Google](#)]

1128) Joh. 3:1.

"*Contemptus sacramenti damnat, non privatio*. [Google]" According to Lutheran doctrine, of absolute necessity is faith in the forgiveness of sins acquired by Christ, or regeneration, but not baptism, because faith and regeneration can also be present through the mere word of the Gospel.

9. The baptismal customs. ^

In the course of time, a number of customs have come into use in the administration of baptism, which have the purpose of explaining and illustrating the nature and effectiveness of baptism.¹¹²⁹⁾ Gerhard divides¹¹³⁰⁾ the "ceremonies and customs" common at baptism into three classes: 1. some are commanded by God, 2. some freely applied by the apostles, 3. some added by ecclesiastical persons. But the division into two is to be preferred. This is also meant by Gerhard, since he combines the second and third class into one class, when he says that only the ceremonies commanded by God (the application of water in the name of the triune God) are binding for the church, whereas those freely applied by the apostles stand just as much in the freedom of the church as those added by the later church. Under "baptismal customs" we deal with all "ceremonies and customs" not commanded by God, and here we mention those that have been excluded from the baptismal forms of the Lutheran Church, although not everywhere. In Walther, "¹¹³¹⁾ the following enumeration is found: 1. the remembrance concerning original sin; 2. the naming; 3. the so-called small exorcism; 4. the sign of the cross; 6. prayers and benediction; 6. the great exorcism; 7. reading of Mark. 10:13-16; 8. Laying on of hands; 9. Our Father; 10. Renunciation together with the apostolic profession of faith; 11. Use of godparents; 12. Putting on of the vesture shirt; 13. Benediction.¹¹³²⁾ On the one hand, Christians should know that these customs belong to the realm of indifferent things, and therefore nothing is lost from the validity of baptism if several or even all matters are not applied due to circumstances. Also Gerhard says: "In the customs neither commanded nor forbidden by God (*in*

1129) Luther, [St. L. X, 2138](#).

1130) *L- de baptismo*, § 254. 255.

1131) Pastorale, [pp. 130](#) ff.

1132) Gerhard's enumeration of the *rite L. de bapt.* used in the Lutheran Church, § 258-269, of those used in the Papal Church § 257.

ritibus adiaphoris), the liberty which Christ has dearly purchased and bestowed upon his Church is to be maintained, namely, that they may be freely observed without the opinion that they are necessary, and that they may be abolished and changed by order and with the consent of the Church, especially when they cease to be useful, do not attain their salutary purpose, and degenerate into abuse and superstition." On the other hand, in the case of baptism as a public act, the customs should not be left to the arbitrariness of the individual, not even of the pastor. The Formula of Concord gives the right answer to the question of who is entitled to determine, or change, the baptismal customs, when it speaks of "church customs" in the 10th article.¹¹³³⁾ Accordingly, we believe, teach, and confess that the Church of God in every place and at every time shall have the opportunity, power, and authority to change, diminish, and increase the same, without levity or offence, in a proper manner, as is at all times deemed most useful, conducive, and best for good order, Christian discipline and discipline, Evangelical prosperity, and the edification of the church. It goes without saying that the individual local congregations should, as far as possible, conform to other congregations of the orthodox confession, both as an outward testimony of unity in doctrine and to avoid confusion among those members of the congregation who pass from one congregation to another. — A few remarks on the baptismal customs found in the Lutheran church may still find room here. The reminder of original sin, with which our baptismal formula¹¹³⁴⁾ also begins, has the purpose of pointing out the necessity of baptism, "because from Adam we are all conceived and born in sins." — The naming associated with baptism has a very practical purpose. It serves as a reminder that in his baptism the baptized person has a promise of grace issued to his name, that is, to his person, and valid for the whole of his life.¹¹³⁵⁾ — How the exorcism came among the baptismal customs,

1133) p. 698, 9th [*Trigl. 1055. Sol. Decl., X, 9* 

1134) Kirchenagende für ev.-luth. congregations, issued by the General German Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, etc. St. Louis, Mo. 1856.


1135) The framed baptismal certificates are a very suitable room decoration in Christian houses, especially also in the study rooms of theological students.

and in what sense it passed into the Lutheran agendas, Walther reports.¹¹³⁶⁾ Walther himself, following Chemnitz, Hutter and Gerhard, judges: "Now, it is true that exorcism has not been abolished within our German Lutheran Church in the manner which Hutter rightly describes as the only correct one; rather, with the intrusion of indifferentism and rationalism, that ceremony has mostly fallen in the most disorderly manner; but since the same evidently belongs to those ceremonies which, in order not to lead to misunderstanding, first require explanation, it is not to be hastily abolished where it still exists, still less, however, should it be aimed at being reintroduced." The possible misunderstanding is that exorcism might be thought of as a bodily possession of the child, while yet only a spiritual captivity in the realm of the prince of darkness is to be thought of. — The use of baptismal sponsors, as is well known, not infrequently causes distress to the practical pastor. We believe that Walther gives the right counsel here also when he remarks:¹¹³⁷⁾ "It is true that the pastor must strive to ensure that only righteous Lutherans are chosen as godparents, and, in order that this may happen, to accustom his congregation to the fact that the baptism to be performed is reported to him before the godparents are invited; however, if well-meaning dissenters have already been invited, or if they already approach the baptismal font, the pastor should not turn them away, thus causing them public embarrassment, and thereby arousing in them a lasting aversion to our church and our ministry. For as unjust as it is for Lutherans to assume a sponsorship in irreligious churches and thus participate in the worship of the false believers, it is not conscience violating to allow well-meaning dissenters to be witnesses to our lawfully performed baptism in the designated case." Our baptismal form with the question whether the godparents are willing, if necessary, to provide for the instruction of the child in the Lutheran doctrines presupposes orthodox godparents. To impose this obligation on dissenters would be immoral for both parts. "Well-meaning" people of other faiths also see this. Thus, the distinction between godparents and baptismal witnesses will help out of trouble in most cases. If the pastor were in the position of performing a baptism in which only dissenters or

1136) *Pastorale*, p. 133 ff.

1137) *Pastorale*, p. 136 f.

unbelievers were present, he would know how to use the baptismal form with the omissions required by these circumstances. Through the renunciation and the profession of faith, the effect of baptism is expressed, namely that through baptism the child is transferred from the kingdom of the devil into the kingdom of Christ. Because this can only happen in such a way that the child has its own faith in baptism, the question about faith is addressed to the child and answered by the godparents in the place of the child. Here it is naturally assumed that the child has its own faith in baptism and is not baptized on the faith of the godparents or the Christian church or even its own future faith. The children's own faith is to be held to by all means. Any doctrine according to which the blessing of baptism should pass to the child without faith being present as a means of acceptance on the part of the child is outside Christianity.¹¹³⁸⁾ The blessing of baptism consists in the forgiveness of sins, and the forgiveness of sins cannot be appropriated by any other means than faith. "Such things" (namely, "receiving in the water the blessed salvation promised") "the fist nor the body cannot do, but the heart must believe."¹¹³⁹⁾ The question of where the child got its own faith should not grieve us seriously. Because we know that baptism has taken the place of circumcision, and is therefore the means of grace for infants, and because Christ means to bring infants to Himself in order to bless them, and promises them the kingdom of heaven, we are justified in leaving to Him (Christ) the care of the *ληπτικόν*, faith, by which alone they can receive blessing and the kingdom of heaven on their part. Moreover, we know that baptism belongs to the gospel, and that the gospel has it in itself to work the faith which it demands. We say, then, that just as the word of the gospel, by offering the forgiveness of sins, also works faith in the forgiveness of sins offered, so also baptism works and strengthens faith, not as a result of any physical or magical power put into the baptismal water, but as a result of the promise of the forgiveness of sins connected with water baptism. Luther: "So we say that the infants are brought to baptism by other people's

1138) This is the *iudaica opinio* of the scholastics. Apol. 204, 18 ff. [Trigl. 313, XIII, 18 ff. 

1139) Large Catechism, p. 490, 36 [Trigl. 741, Large Cat., Bap., 36 .

faith and work; but when they have come there, and the priest or baptizer acts with them in Christ's stead, he blesses them and gives them faith and the kingdom of heaven; for the priest's word and deed are Christ's own word and work.¹¹⁴⁰⁾ "For what is baptism but the gospel to which they are brought? Although they only hear it once, they hear it all the more, because Christ receives them, who brought them to be baptized."¹¹⁴¹⁾ We are more certain of the faith in infant baptism than in adult baptism. In the baptism of adults, we must accept their word when we ask them if they believe. And we should honor their word. If they deceive us or themselves, that is their business. "You are excused and baptize rightly," says Luther.¹¹⁴²⁾ But in infant baptism we have Christ's word for it that the children believe, because he means to bring them to himself, to bless them, and consequently also to see to it that they are equipped with the means of receiving faith. Luther says with reference to Mark. 10: "Methinks that if baptism should be certain, let infant baptism be the most certain, precisely because of the word of Christ, since he calls them to himself, since the old men come of their own accord, and that in the old men there may be deceitfulness of open reason, but in the children there can be no deceitfulness of hidden reason, in whom Christ works his blessing, as he has called them to himself. It is a good word, and not to be taken in vain, that he calls the children to him, and reproves them that rebuke him. ... In sum, the baptism and comfort of the children stands in the word: 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for such is the kingdom of God.' He has spoken this and does not lie. So it must be right and Christian to bring the little children to him; this cannot happen except in baptism. So also it must be certain that he will bless them and give the kingdom of heaven to all who so come to him, as the words are, 'Such is the kingdom of God.'"¹¹⁴³⁾ — It has been said and is still said that it sounds strange that at baptism we ask the child about faith and have the godparents give us the answer. But this happens for obvious reasons. Because God has arranged it in such a way that the children cannot yet speak, but we know from the Word of God that in baptism they will be able to

1140) [op. cit., p. 492 f.](#) 1141) [op. cit., p. 497.](#)

1142) [XI, 495.](#) 1143) [op. cit., 496 f.](#)

have their own faith, we speak out what they cannot yet speak out. At the same time, we take the opportunity to confess the Christian doctrine of the children's faith, which is denied in the midst of Christianity, when baptizing the children. Therefore, if the circumstances are considered correctly, the matter is not peculiar, but perfectly in order. This also answers the question whether a baptismal form with a question about faith is appropriate for infant baptism at all, and whether our church has not transferred the form for adult baptism somewhat thoughtlessly to infant baptism. The answer to this, in accordance with the foregoing, is that the question of faith is no less appropriate for infant baptism than for adult baptism, because we know of infants, even more than of adults, that they believe in or at baptism. It is also advisable to keep the question of faith in infant baptism, so that we do not get the idea, as Luther reminds us, "that the Christian church has two kinds of baptism, and that the infants do not have the same baptism as the adults, when St. Paul says, Eph. 4:5, that there is only one baptism, one Lord, one faith".¹¹⁴⁴⁾ — But at what point of the act of baptism do we have to think of faith as coming into being? Luther is not particularly concerned about establishing the point in time. He says faith is there "before or ever in the baptism."¹¹⁴⁵⁾ What Luther is all concerned with is this, that the child is not baptized on the faith of the godparents or of the Christian church, or even on its own future faith, but has faith of its own. But it is safest to think of faith as arising in the actual act of baptism. As Luther himself says in the above-mentioned words: When the children are brought to baptism through foreign faith and "the baptizer acts with them in Christ's stead, he blesses them and gives them faith and the kingdom of heaven; for the priest's word and deed are Christ's own word and work". Now, as far as the consummation of a right baptism is concerned, everything can ultimately be left out except the application of water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. — The question arose how to ask about the faith of the child before the actual act of baptism. One has thought of moving the question of faith behind the act of baptism. But

1144) St. L. XI, 490. 1145) op. cit., 489.

against this arrangement it could be objected again that it is chronologically incorrect and causes the perverse idea as if faith is not already present in and at baptism. Therefore, we will have to leave it at that, that what coincides chronologically in the actual act of baptism is necessarily separated in the baptismal form, because we men are so constituted that we cannot think and say everything at the same time. Finally, it behooves all of us in re "infant faith" to make a confession. If we look at the matter without the Word of God, infant faith seems strange to us. Our psychological knowledge fails us here. We, too, probably pity the poor children because of their still undeveloped reason and consider them neither capable of faith nor of the kingdom of heaven nor of baptism. The disciples had similar thoughts. For when infants were brought to Jesus to be touched, the disciples were rebuking (ἐπετίμων) those who were carrying them. The disciples also thought: *cui bono*? The whole being of the children with Christ could come down to mere formalities. But the Lord defended these thoughts of formality. He "much displeased, ἡγανάκτησεν, and said to them: Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God." At the same time, Christ instructs His disciples and all of us about what the developed reason that accumulates in us over the years is capable of for entering the kingdom of God. He says: "Verily I say unto you: Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, ὡς παιδίον, will not enter it." The Lord thus reverses the judgment of the disciples. While the disciples hold that the children are not the proper subiectum quod for the blessing of Christ, Christ instructs them to the effect that the aged must be reduced to the child state if they are to share in the kingdom of heaven. Thus, we too must renounce our own calculations and receive the right thoughts about the faith and the salvation of children through faith in Christ's words.

10. The baptism of John. ^

Thomasius polemicizes against the older Lutheran theologians for "asserting the essential and complete identity of Johannine baptism with Christian baptism."¹¹⁴⁶ To the matter would be to say,

1146) *Dogmatics* IV, 10. Thomasius turns namely against Chemnitz, Gerhard and Aegidius Hunnius.

that according to the Scriptures the baptism of John was really means of grace with vis dativa and vis effectiva. As the Christian baptism with which the Christians were baptized on the first day of Pentecost was a baptism "for the remission of sins" (εἰς ἀφεσιν τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν), so also the baptism of John is explicitly described as a "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἀφεσιν ἀμαρτιῶν).¹¹⁴⁷⁾ And how Christian baptism is called the bath of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, by which saving takes place (ἐσώσεν ἡμᾶς διὰ λοντροῦ παλιγγενεσίας καὶ πνεύματος ἁγίου), in contrast to becoming saved from one's own works (οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων τῶν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ὧν ἐποιήσαμεν ἡμεῖς):¹¹⁴⁸⁾ so also John's baptism is described as a means by which the Holy Spirit works regeneration and "a man from among the Pharisees" enters God's kingdom: "Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit (ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος), he cannot enter the kingdom of God."¹¹⁴⁹⁾ Admittedly, the right understanding of John's baptism is not of immediate practical importance inasmuch as nowadays no one is baptized with this baptism.¹¹⁵⁰⁾ But in

 1147) Mark. 1:4; Luke 3:3. 1148) Tit. 3:5. 1149) Joh. 3:5.
 1150) Thus Chemnitz, *Examen, De bapt.*, p. m. 230. Likewise Calov, *Systema*, I, 953. With Chemnitz is also found op. cit., p. 233 sqq., a careful enumeration and review of the various expositions of Acts 19:1-6. Of the opinion that the words, v. 5: "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of Lord Jesus," belong not to Luke, but to Paul, he judges: *Graecus textus illam explicationem facile patitur et admittit*. [Google] But he does not want the anathema to be pronounced on someone who disagrees on the question whether the twelve disciples of John at Ephesus were still baptized in the name of Christ. The view of that historical report Acts 19:1-6 is a matter of its own. The character of John's baptism as a means of grace stands from the descriptions that Scripture gives us about this baptism. Of the view that the baptism of John was a baptism of repentance "without faith in Christ and without forgiveness of sins," Chemnitz judges: "Such a repentance is certainly simply pagan (*res ethnica*). Also Paul says Acts 19 explicitly that John baptized with the baptism of repentance in such a way that he taught at the same time that those whom he baptized believed in Jesus Christ. Mark and Luke also affirm that John preached of his baptism that it was not merely a baptism of repentance, but of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Even the expression 'for the remission of sins' does not take away the remission of sins from John's baptism. ... The same expression is used for the baptism of Christ Acts 2:38: 'Repent, and be baptized every man ... for the remission of sins.'"

combating the means of grace character of John's baptism, unclear concepts of the forgiveness of sins and of becoming saved come to light. Thus in Thomasius, when he says: "The forgiveness of sins, which the Johannine baptism granted, was more of an external and preparatory nature, analogous to the effect of the Old Testament sacrifices. It did not yet make the one who received it a member of the kingdom of heaven and prepare him for the same. Thus it was a model for Christian baptism, which it could not replace. For the disciples of the Lord, the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost served as a full substitute." A forgiveness of sins "more external and preparatory in nature" is an unthinkable concept. One either has forgiveness of sins, or one does not. Even the Old Testament sacrifices, in so far as they were types of Christ's atoning sacrifice, offered forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, and the faithful Israelites, waiting for Israel's consolation, appropriated the same also in faith."¹¹⁵¹⁾ Thomasius' statement that Johannine baptism did not make one "a member of the kingdom of heaven" contradicts Christ's John 3:6 statement that men like Nicodemus could enter the "kingdom of God" through Johannine baptism. "Kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God" are synonyms, however. Thomasius also speaks as if the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the means of grace for the disciples of the Lord, by which they first became fully partakers of the forgiveness of sins and the sonship of God, while the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost had the purpose of equipping the disciples for their calling as witnesses in the world: "Ye shall receive power of the Lord, which shall come upon you, and shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the ends of the earth." ¹¹⁵²⁾

1151) Acts 10:43. Cf. the section "The Sacrifice of Christ and the Atonement of the Old Testament.," II, 453 f.

1152) Acts 1:8. Likewise Luke 24:46-49. The ancient theologians therefore distinguish baptismus sanguinis or martyrdom, Matt. 20:22, and baptismus flaminis or the outpouring of special gifts of the Holy Spirit, Acts 1:5, from baptismus fluminis or water baptism, which is a sacrament for the forgiveness of sins. Cf. Quenstedt II, 1080.

The Lord's Supper. ^

(De coena sacra)

1. The divine order of the Lord's Supper. ^

Like the sermon of the Gospel and baptism, the Holy Communion is not merely a church, but divine order (*institutio divina*). Christ instituted the Lord's Supper and at the same time commanded that it be celebrated in His Church until the Last Day, which command is repeated by the Apostle Paul.¹¹⁵³⁾ This is how the first Christians understood it. Like baptism, we find the Lord's Supper in use in the apostolic church.¹¹⁵⁴⁾

Consistent enthusiasts like the Quakers reject not only baptism but also the Lord's Supper as a divine ordinance to be followed in the church. The Quakers are also more consistent on this point in rejecting the "useless external things" than the great majority of the Reformed. Whereas most of the Reformed want to figuratively grasp only that part of the words of the Lord's Supper which refers to the body and blood of Christ, and therefore reject only the oral partaking (*manducatio oralis*) of the body and blood of Christ, but want to let the oral partaking of the bread and wine stand, the Quakers consistently go one step further. They also understand bread and wine figuratively and therefore want Christians who are truly spiritually minded to enjoy bread and wine not with the mouth, but only with faith. They also have a "scriptural proof" for this. Just as most Reformed Christians refer to the scriptural words: "Flesh is of no use"¹¹⁵⁵⁾ for their rejection of the oral consumption of the body and blood of Christ, so the Quakers refer to scriptural words such as: "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking"¹¹⁵⁶⁾ and: "Let no one therefore make you conscience about food or about drink".¹¹⁵⁷⁾ According to Revelation 3:20, the true Lord's Supper is enjoyed in the heart. The external action that Christ once performed with his disciples "for the sake of the weak" has no more validity for the later church than the

1153) Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:25: "Do this in remembrance of me."

1154) 1 Cor. 10:16-22; 11:17-34. 1155) Jn. 6:63.

1156) Rom. 14:17. 1157) Col. 2:16.

washing the feet, anointing the sick with oil, and abstaining from blood and asphyxiation.¹¹⁵⁸⁾ In more recent times, theologians of a critical trend¹¹⁵⁹⁾ have denied the divine endowment of the Lord's Supper and the command to repeat it. Against it Cremer says:¹¹⁶⁰⁾

 1158) The detailed evidence from Barclay's Apology is found in Baumgarten, *Theol.-Streitgk.* III, 362 sqq, reprinted. Günther, *Symbolik* 4, p. 318, quotes from Barclay's Catechism: "What other scriptural passages show that it is not necessary that the commandment of bread and wine should continue? The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking. ... Let no man therefore make you conscience of meat or of drink." On the value and meaning of the act which Christ once performed with his disciples, and which also passed into the use of the apostolic church, Barclay says, *Apol., thes. 13: Fractio panis per Christ cum discipulis erat figura* [namely, of the spiritual and inward enjoyment of the body and blood of Christ], *qua aliquando in ecclesia etiam utebantur illi, qui rem figuratam receperunt, imbecillium causa, sicut abstinere a rebus strangulatis et a sanguine, lavare invicem pedes, infirmos oleo ungere, quae omnia iussa sunt non minore autoritate et solennitate, quam priora illa duo* (namely baptism and the Lord's Supper), *sed cum tantum fuerint umbrae meliorum, illis cessant* (they cease for those), *qui substantiam* (the essence, the Lord's Supper in the heart) *assequuti sunt.* [[Google](#)]

1159) B. Weiß, Jülicher, Spitta.

1160) RE.³ I, 33. When deniers of the divine order of the Lord's Supper plead that only the accounts in Paul and Luke have the words, "This do in remembrance of me," it must first be said that the testimony of two witnesses has validity according to divine and human order. But even apart from the direct command in Paul and Luke, it is an unthought that only for the disciples, and not for the whole Church, should be intended the supper in which Christ presents his body and blood given in the atoning death, "the blood of the New Testament shed for many." From this Cremer also points out, RE.³ I, 33 f.: "It is also not in the case of Mark and Matthew that the suggestion of a foundation for the following time is missing. Once both have the designation of the contents of the cup as 'my blood of the covenant,' to αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης, Matt. 26:28; Mark. 14:24, and then Mark adds: το ἐκχυνόμενον νπερ πολλών, Matthew: το περί πολλών ἐκχυνόμενον εἰς ἄφεσιν αμαρτιών. But if Christ presents his 'blood of the covenant' to the disciples, it is impossible that this presentation should be thought of as confined to the disciples, and this is strengthened by the mention of the 'many' (πολλοί) in the following addition." Cremer also correctly adds that the real reason for rejecting the divine order of the Lord's Supper lies elsewhere than in the alleged difference in the accounts. "While for Rückert the difficulty lies in the danger of alienation, which is unavoidably bound up with the 'rite,' and which could not possibly have been hidden from Christ" (the rationalists are as decidedly opposed to all "legal alienation" as the enthusiasts), "Spitta, in particular, rejects the institution as a

"No fact can be better attested at all than the provision of the Lord's Supper for His Church, originating from Jesus Himself."

The relationship between the Lord's Supper and baptism is correctly described when the ancient theologians call baptism sacramentum initiationis and the Lord's Supper sacramentum confirmationis. The reception of baptism precedes the use of the Lord's Supper. On the first Pentecost, converts are invited to be baptized, not to celebrate the Lord's Supper. This is to be noted for church practice. If it turns out that such persons who desire Holy Communion with us have not yet been baptized, we perform baptism on them beforehand.¹¹⁶¹⁾

The names of Holy Communion are partly given in the Scriptures,¹¹⁶²⁾ partly formed in the church usage in imitation of the words, nature and circumstances of Holy Communion.¹¹⁶³⁾ One should not start a dispute about the names — not even about the name "Mass" (*missa*) — as long as with the

foundation for the Church because he declares the relationship of the Lord's Supper from Christ's death impossible." This class of theologians does not want to know anything about the divinity of Christ and the *satisfactio vicaria*.

1161) Walther, *Pastorale*, p. 190. Walther also refers to the "analogy of the Passover meal", to which according to Ex 12:48 only those were admitted who were already received into the covenant of grace through circumcision.

1162) 1 Cor. 11:20: meal of the Lord, κυριακὸν δεῖπνον; 1 Cor. 10:21: table of the Lord, τράπεζα Κυρίου.

1163) Like Eucharist, following εὐχαριστήσας, Mark. 14:23; Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24; communion according to κοινωνία, 1 Cor. 10:16; supper or night meal according to 1 Cor. 11:23: ὁ Κύριος Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ κτλ. Gerhard, *L. de s. coena*, § 3-9, distinguishes biblical and church designations. As biblical he designates *coena dominica*, *mensa et calix Domini*, *communicatio corporis et sanguinis Christi* (with the remark: *ubi tamen potius definitio rei quam nominis proposita dici posset*), *novum testamentum* (*quia instante mortis agone a Christo instituta est et quidem in memoriam mortis testatoris*), *fractio panis* (with the remark: *Sed quia evidenter et apodictice demonstrari nequit, oportere in illis locis, Act. 2:42; 20:7, per fractionem panis intelligi administrationem coenae, ideo quidam de vulgaribus epulis phrasin accipiunt, quia sensu usurpatur Luc. 24:35, Act. 27, 35 atque alibi passim*)... [Google] As ecclesiastical expressions Gerhard mentions *ευχαριστία*, *σύναξις*, *αγάπη*, *λειτουργία*, *θυσία* and *προσφορά*, *μυστήριον*, *sacramentum altaris*, *missa*. Gerhard offers much historical material to explain these names.


name is not binding doctrines contrary to the Scriptures.¹¹⁶⁴⁾ In our time, perhaps the name "Lord's Supper" is most commonly used among Protestants. Newer theologians of different trends like to use the term "*Herrnmahl*".¹¹⁶⁵⁾

2. The relationship of the Lord's Supper to the other means of grace. ^

What the Lord's Supper has in common with the word of the gospel and with baptism is that it is a medium of justification (*medium iustificationis sive remissionis peccatorum*). The Lord's Supper, too, is nothing more and nothing less than a means ordered by Christ, by which Christ offers and appropriates to the participants in this meal the forgiveness of sins that he has purchased. In other words, the Lord's Supper does not belong to the law, but is pure gospel, that is, it is not a work that we do to Christ, but a work that Christ does to us. It is a work of Christ whereby he assures us that we have a gracious God through his atoning death. This is clearly expressed by the words Christ uses in instituting the Lord's Supper. For when Christ says, "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you," and, "This is my blood which is poured out for you," these words can have no other meaning than that we ourselves no longer have to pay our sins to God, but that our sins have already been paid for by Christ's body given for us and by Christ's blood poured out for us. Thus Luther is right when he inculcates, "The Mass [of the Lord's Supper] is not a work or sacrifice, but a word and sign of divine grace, which God uses to establish and strengthen our faith in Him [namely, that He is gracious to us]." ¹¹⁶⁶⁾ The Apology states:¹¹⁶⁷⁾ "The sacrament is

1164) Cf. Luther against Carlstadt, XX, 174 ff.: "Carlstadt scolds us for the sake of the name that we call the sacrament a mass, and takes it upon us that we are Christ's executioners, murderers, and of the atrocious words more, and even worse than the Papists, because mass is called a sacrifice in Hebrew, and shall not help us that we argue and have argued with such seriousness and driving that the mass is not a sacrifice. Now it is also a shameful, childish, womanish [AE 40, 119: "effeminate"] thing before the world, if one is otherwise one in the matter and yet quarrels over words; which Paul reproves and calls them *λογομάχους*, word warriors and quarrelsome."

1165) Holtzmann, Neut. Theol. II, 200; Nösgen, Neut. Offenb. I. 545.

1166) St. L. XIX, 346. 1167) M. 259, 49. [Trigl. 401, XXIV, 49 

instituted for this purpose, that it may be a seal and sure sign of the forgiveness of sins, by which the hearts may be reminded and the faith strengthened, that they may assuredly believe that their sins are forgiven." Thus the Smalcald Articles rightly include "the holy sacrament of the altar" among the "gospel" and call it, along with the oral word of the gospel and baptism, "counsel and help against sin."¹¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, the Lord's Supper has in common with private absolution and baptism that it includes in itself an individual promise of the forgiveness of sins made to the individual person. Nevertheless, the *differentia specifica*, or that which is peculiar to the Lord's Supper, is very clearly marked in Scripture. In the Lord's Supper, individual absolution from the guilt of sin, made out to the individual person, is confirmed or sealed by the presentation of the body of Christ, given for us, and by the presentation of the blood of Christ, shed for us. This is what distinguishes the Lord's Supper from the other means of grace.

But it is precisely with this wonderful means of grace that Christ has had little luck in the midst of Christendom. Rome bisects the Lord's Supper by the withdrawing of the chalice, and the body of Christ which it wants to leave is, in the exact understanding of the Roman doctrine, not the body which is given for us, but a body which is supposed to have come into being by the transformation of the bread into the body of Christ.¹¹⁶⁹ To this is added on the part of Rome the abomination of the Sacrifice of the Mass, according to which the Body of Christ is not presented and received for the assurance of the forgiveness of sins, but is made an "unbloody" sacrifice offered by the priest for the living and the dead, to the dishonor of Christ's one and perfect atoning sacrifice and to the suppression of faith in the forgiveness of sins available through Christ's sacrifice. Reformed church fellowships remove the body and blood of Christ from the Lord's Supper altogether and make the Lord's Supper a celebration in which they distribute bread and wine as images of the absent body and blood of Christ. They not only declare the reception of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper to be absolutely impossible, but in some of their most noble doctrines they go so far as to declare — according to the procedure of the heathen — Christ's Supper, in which Christ's body given for us and Christ's body given for us,

1168) M. 319. [[Trigl. 491, Part III, Art. IV](#) , [L. XIX, 1303](#).]

1169) Luther, [St.](#)

is cannibalism, a cyclops meal, a Thyestic meal and a fabrication of the devil.¹¹⁷⁰⁾ Newer Lutheran theologians are not satisfied that Christ's body and blood are received for the forgiveness of sins, but they think they should enrich the old Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper by ascribing to themselves also a physical effect ("natural effect"). The multiform error requires a detailed exposition of the Scriptural doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

3. The scriptural doctrine of the Lord's Supper. ^

Three different doctrines of the Lord's Supper are put forward within external Christianity: 1. the doctrine that only the body and blood of Christ are in the Lord's Supper, or, what is the same, that in the Lord's Supper the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ. This is the doctrine of transubstantiation (*transsubstantiatio*), which has been Roman church doctrine since the Lateran Council of 1215¹¹⁷¹⁾ and is expressed in particular in the Council of Trent.¹¹⁷²⁾

2. The doctrine that only bread and wine are in the Lord's Supper, or, what is the same, that bread and wine are only images (symbols) of the absent body and blood of Christ. Thus not only Zwingli, but also Calvin and all the Reformed together with all the Reformed sects. That Calvin "deepened" Zwingli's doctrine of the Lord's Supper and assumed a kind of middle position between Zwingli and Luther,¹¹⁷³⁾ is a

1170) The evidence later.

1171) Mansi XXII, 982: (*Christi*) *corpus et sanguis in sacramento altaris sub speciebus panis et vini veraciter continentur transsubstantiatis pane in corpus et vino in sanguinem potestate divina. ... Hoc utique sacramentum nemo potest conficere nisi sacerdos rite vocatus.* [[Google](#)]

1172) The Tridentine speaks sess. XIII, can. 2 pronounces a curse on all deniers of the doctrine of conversion: *Si quis ... negaverit mirabilem illam et singularem conversionem totius substantiae panis in corpus et totius substantiae vini in sanguinem, manentibus dumtaxat speciebus panis et vini, quam quidem conversionem catholica ecclesia transsubstantiatioem appellat, anathema sit.* [[Google](#)] The material on the formation of this doctrine (by Paschasius Radbertus, † c. 865, Lanfrank, † 1089) despite rising opposition (Rabanus Maurus, † 856; Ratramnus of Corbie, † after 868; Berengar of Tours, † 1088) in [Schmid-Hauck 4, pp. 234-252](#). 287 ff. Cf. Seeberg, [Dogmengesch. II, 10 f. 21 ff. 58 ff. 113 ff.](#) Hase, *Ev. Dogmatik* 3, p. 446 ff.

1173) Loofs, for example, thinks, RE.³ I, 68, that Calvin's "view is more easily and genetically correct to be understood as a modification of Luther's than of Zwingli's view."

very popular opinion in modern dogma history, but it is quite incorrect. In the *Consensus Tigurinus*, edited by Calvin himself,¹¹⁷⁴⁾ it is said of the body of Christ that it is "as far removed from the Lord's Supper as heaven is from earth",¹¹⁷⁵⁾ and the literal (*literalis*) version of the words of the Lord's Supper is judged to be "very perverse".¹¹⁷⁶⁾

3. The doctrine that both bread and wine and the body and blood of Christ are in the Lord's Supper, or, which is the same thing, that in the Lord's Supper Christ's body is received with the bread and Christ's blood with the wine, in a union which takes place only in the Lord's Supper and is therefore called the *unio sacramentalis* in distinction from the *unio personalis* which takes place between God and man in the person of Christ, and in distinction from the *unio mystica* which takes place between Christ and the believers. This is the doctrine of the Lutheran Church as briefly expressed in Luther's Catechism. To the question, "What is the sacrament of the altar?" is answered here, "It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted for us Christians to eat and drink by Christ himself." Likewise, in the 10th article of the Augsburg Confession, both are mentioned as present: Bread and Wine and Body and Blood of Christ: "Of the Holy Supper of the Lord it is thus taught that the true Body and Blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, and are there distributed and taken." ¹¹⁷⁷⁾ The 7th article of the Formula of Concord states, "We believe, doctrine, and confess that in Holy Communion the body and blood of Christ are truly

1174) [Schmid-Hauck, Dogmengesch.](#)⁴, p. 405.

1175) op. cit., XXV; [Niemeyer](#), p. 196: *Quia corpus Cliristi, ut fert humani corporis natura et modus, finitum est et caelo, ut loco, continetur, necesse est, a nobis tanto locorum intervallo distare, quanto caelum abest a terra.* [[Google](#)]



1176) *Consensus Tigurinus* XXII; [Niemeyer](#), Pastor 196: *Qui in solennibus Coenae verbis: Hoc est corpus nieumi, Hic est sanguis meus, praecise literalem, ut loquuntur, sensum urgent, eos tanquam praeposteros interpretes repudiamus. Nam extra controversiam ponimus, figurate accipienda esse, ut esse panis et vinum dicantur id, quod significant.* [[Google](#)]

1177) M., p. 41. [[Trigl. 46, X](#) [🔗](#)] "Under the form" does not mean "under the apparent form", but, as The Apology declares, "with the visible things, bread and wine" (*cum illis rebus, quae videntur*), Christ's body and blood is presented and taken. (Apol. 164, 54.) [[Trigl 247, X, 54](#) [🔗](#)] Cf. F. Bente, *L. u. W. 1918, pp. 385* ff: "Does the 10th Article of the Augustana and the Apology Romanize?"

and essentially present, truly distributed and received with bread and wine. We believe, teach, and confess that the words of Christ's testament are not to be understood otherwise than as they are according to the letter (*ad literam*), that is, that the bread does not signify the absent body of Christ, and the wine the absent blood of Christ, but that it is truly for the sake of sacramental union (*propter sacramentalem unionem*) the body and blood of Christ."¹¹⁷⁸⁾

Which of these three doctrines is the doctrine of Holy Scriptures?

The Roman doctrine of transformation is excluded by the fact that even after "the blessing" (consecration) of bread and wine, bread and wine are still called present, as in 1 Cor. 11:27: "Whosoever eateth unworthily of this bread, or drinketh of the cup of the Lord, is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." The Roman objection that only the outward appearance or semblance of bread is present contradicts the scriptural words, which do not refer to the semblance of bread, but of bread. In the Smalcald Articles¹¹⁷⁹⁾ Luther therefore rightly judges: "Of transubstantiation we pay no attention at all to the pointed sophistries, since they teach that bread and wine leave or lose their natural essence and remain only the form and color of bread and not really bread. For it rhymes best with Scripture that bread is and remains, as St. Paul himself calls it: 'The bread we break' (1 Cor. 10:16), and: 'So he eats of the bread' (1 Cor. 11:28)." ¹¹⁸⁰⁾ The Roman procedure of substituting a semblance of bread for bread is so arbitrary that, if it were to be applied, all the indications of Scripture could be transformed into a mere semblance. Related to the doctrine of transubstantiation is the multiform mischief that the Roman

1178) M. 539, 6. 7. [[Trigl. 809, Epit., 6-7](#) 
[[Trigl. 493, Part III, Art. VI.](#) 

1179) M. 320, 5.

1180) Luther calls [XIX, 1320](#) the transubstantiation a "monk's dream, confirmed by Thomas Aquinas and confirmed by popes", and adds: "Because they insist so hard on it out of their own sacrilege without scripture, we only want to hold against them and to defy that truly bread and wine remain there beside the body and blood of Christ ...; because the gospel calls the sacrament bread, thus: the bread is the body of Christ. We stand by this; it is certain enough, against all sophists' dreams, that it is bread which it calls bread. Seduce us, let us dare to do so." Some other statements of Luther on transubstantiation: [XIX, 25](#) (very detailed); [XIX, 1302 ff.](#) (collation speech that Luther "did of the lousy article transubstantiation by chance"); [XIX, 1306](#) (letter to George of Anhalt).

church engages in the "Lord's Supper", namely the sacrifice of the Mass, by which Christ's sacrifice on the cross is supposedly repeated continuously without bloodshed, furthermore the keeping, showing, worshipping, carrying around ("Corpus Christi") of the host as the alleged body of Christ, the withdrawal of the chalice with the justification by the doctrine of concomitance. This is to be explained in more detail later. —

The Reformed doctrine of absence is ruled out by the fact that Scripture calls the body and blood of Christ present not merely for faith but also for the mouth of the communicants. Christ, in the words, "Take, eat," λάβετε, φάγετε, invites to eat with the mouth, and of that which is presented for the mouth and received with the mouth, Christ says that it is his body and blood. The assertion of the Reformed that Christ's body and blood are not present for the mouth, but only for faith, deprives the words "eat," "drink," of the object given them by Christ. Chemnitz remarks: "When Christ says: 'Eat, drink,' he prescribes the manner of taking (*modum sumptionis*), namely, that we take with the mouth (*ore sumamus*) what is present and presented in the Lord's Supper. No one can deny that the words of eating and drinking are to be understood by such a taking, unless at the same time he wanted to cancel and overthrow the whole external action of the Lord's Supper. ... But of what is present in the Lord's Supper, what is offered, what the eaters receive with their mouths, he expressly declares and says: 'This is my body, which is given for you; this is my blood, which is poured out for you for the remission of sins.'¹¹⁸¹) To be sure, we also have in the words of the Lord's Supper a very clear request for faith or spiritual eating. But this request follows on from the eating with the mouth and is based on the same. The request to believe is contained in the addition by which Christ describes the body presented for eating as the body "which is given for you." The disciples, then, in receiving Christ's body orally, are to believe that they have a reconciled God or the forgiveness of sins through Christ's body given for them. The request to believe is also contained in the words, "Do these things in remembrance of me." This too is

1181) *Fundamenta sanæ doctrinæ etc.* 1623, p. 12.

the purpose of the Lord's Supper, und will be discussed in more detail later on, in particular in the section on the purpose of the Lord's Supper.

The Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper is the doctrine of Scripture, because it allows both the words that speak of the presence of the bread and the words that speak of the presence of the body of Christ to be valid without deduction or addition. With reference to the antithesis, the Lutheran doctrine does not, together with Rome, transform bread into pseudo-bread, nor does it, together with the Reformed fellowships, transform the body of Christ into a pseudo-body, that is, into an image (symbol) of the absent body of Christ. It allows true, essential bread and the true, essential body of Christ to be in the Lord's Supper because the scriptural words from the Lord's Supper read both. But this is to be explained in more detail because of the Roman and the Reformed contrast.

First of all, it is necessary to address the question of the nature of the expression when Christ presents bread and says of the bread presented for eating, "This is my body." As is known, the classification of this phrase has caused much disputation. Before all learned and unlearned investigation, it is clear that the words used by Christ are easily understood. This is irrefutably evident from the fact that Christ, at the institution and first celebration of the Lord's Supper, adds no commentary to his words. If there were any difficulty of understanding or even a possibility of misunderstanding in His words, Christ would have added the necessary exegesis. The absence of any commentary makes it certain that in the words, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you," we are dealing with a mode of speech which is understood without comment in mere hearing or reading. In the Lord's Supper Christ makes use of the manner of speaking which is used among all ordinary men in daily intercourse in the presentation of an object, and has therefore terminologically been briefly and appropriately called the *locutio exhibitiva*. This is the manner of speaking according to which, when presenting an object, even if it is bound to another thing,¹¹⁸²⁾ we name only the object that is important to us in the presentation and to which we want to direct attention. This *locutio exhibitiva* is in general use

1182) Terminologically expressed: even if the subject is a "*complexum*".

both in daily intercourse and in Holy Scriptures. Lutheran theologians rightly remind us that when we present food or drink in a vessel, we do not call both the vessel and the food or drink, but only what is presented in the vessel. We would be taken for oddballs and looked at in amazement if we wanted to say in daily life, for example, when water is presented in a glass: Here is 1. a glass, 2. water, but we are expected to name only the water in the predicate: "This is water." ¹¹⁸³⁾ But this is exactly how Christ speaks when in the words of the Lord's Supper, "Take, eat; this is my body!" he does not mention in the predicate the bread which he took from the table, and which the disciples saw with their eyes as present, but he does mention his body, which the disciples did not see, and to which he wished to direct their attention. If Kirn also makes the remark, ¹¹⁸⁴⁾ that Luther's "exposition" of the words of institution "always remains artificial," Kirn thereby only reveals that he has lost sight of the customary use of language among all normal men and also in his own house. The same is to be judged of all theologians who declare Luther's "synecdoche" to be impossible and therefore give it out. ¹¹⁸⁵⁾ Luther's "synecdoche" factually coincides with what we have just said about the locutio exhibitiva. The woman in the house, the man in the store, the children in the street and at play, in short, all normal men continually make use of the "synecdoche" in their intercourse with other men, although only a few know the word. What Luther says about the "synecdoche" in the words of the Lord's Supper can be summarized thus: Bread and body

1183) So e.g. Haffenreffer (*Loci, Tubing. 1606, p. 628*): Familiare et usitatum est, non tantum in Scripturis s., sed etiam in omnibus linguis, ut cum duae quaedam res coniunctae porriguntur et demonstrantur, id totum quidem, duobus constans, porrigitur et demonstratur, atque alterum eorum, quod non ita sensibus expositum est, de illo vere enunciat, ut, si marsupium porrigens dicam: Hic sunt centum floreni, aut dolium monstrans dicam: Hoc est vinum Rhenanum, hoc Italicum, hoc rubellum, aut vitrum tangens dicam: Haec est aqua, haec cerevisia, hoc unguentum etc.. Quibus omnibus exemplis apparet, particulam demonstrativam hoc utrumque sane et vas et potum complecti et propter istam unionem de illo toto, quod demonstratur, verissime enunciari posse alterum, quod sensibus non ita obvium est, alterius autem, quorum unum aut coniunctum est, interventu verissime monstrari aut exhiberi posse. [[Google](#)]

1184) Ev. Dogmatik, p. 130.

1185) Meyer zu Matt. 26:26 ff. Loofs, RE. ³ I, 65. 66.

are and remain distinct in the Lord's Supper according to their essence or substance. The transformation of the bread into the body of Christ is a monk's and sophist's dream. But the bread and the body of Christ are bound together in the Lord's Supper by Christ's word and order into a unity which may be called *unio sacramentalis*. Because of this unity or binding, we say of the communion bread offered for eating: this is Christ's body. We do not deny the existence of the bread, but we name only the one part, the body of Christ, which is of primary importance. Just as we do not say of a purse that is bound with a hundred florins or filled with a hundred florins: This is a purse and a hundred florins, but call only one part, the hundred florins. But let us let Luther himself speak about his "synecdoche". He writes:¹¹⁸⁶⁾ "Such a way of speaking of different beings as of one and the same is called the grammatici synecdoche, and is almost common, not only in Scripture, but also in all languages. As when I show or present a sack or bag, I say, 'These are a hundred florins,' the pointing and the little word 'this' come out of the bag; but because the bag and florins are to some extent one being, as one lump, it also applies to the florins."¹¹⁸⁷⁾ According to the way, I touch a barrel and say: This is Rhenish wine, this is Welsh wine, this is red wine. Again, I touch a glass and say: This is water, this is beer, this is ointment, etc. In all these addresses you see how the little word 'that' points to the vessel, and yet, because the drink and the vessel are to some extent one thing, it is at the same time, indeed primarily, the drink. ... If now here a pointed Wiclef [Ed.-Wycliffe] or Sophist should laugh and say: You show me the bag and say: This is a hundred guilders; how can bag be a hundred guilders? Again, if he said: You show me the barrel and say it is wine. Rather, the barrel is wood and not wine, the bag is leather and not gold: even the children would laugh at him as a fool or a joker. For he tears

1186) St. L. XX, 1034.

1187) When Luther here and in the following addresses "one being", which the bread and the body of Christ become in the Lord's Supper, he does not understand it as "one being" through transformation — which he also explicitly rejects here — but "one being" in the relation that the bread and the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper are bound into one unity through Christ's word and order. Hence also the limitation: "to some extent (*aliquo modo*) one being".

the two united beings from each other and will speak of each one separately, since we are now in such an address, since the two beings have come into one being. For the barrel is no longer bad wood or barrel, but it is a wine wood or wine barrel, and the bag is no longer bad leather or bag, but a gold leather or money bag. But if you want to separate the whole thing and separate the gold and the leather, each matter is of course its own, and then you must address the matter differently, as follows: this is gold, this is leather, this is wine, this is a barrel. But if you leave it completely, then you must also speak of it completely, pointing to the barrel and the bag and saying: This is gold, this is wine, for the sake of the unity of the essence. For one must not pay attention to what such pointed sophists are saying, but look at the language, what kind of way, custom and habit there is to speak. Since such a way of speaking is common to both Scripture and all languages, nothing prevents us from *praedicatio identica*¹¹⁸⁸⁾ in the Lord's Supper. There is also none, but it dreams the Wyclif and the Sophists thus. For although body and bread are two different natures, each for itself, and where they are separated from each other, certainly none is the other, but where they come together and become a completely new being, then they lose their difference, insofar as such a new one being concerns, and how they become and are one thing. So they are called and addressed as one thing, so that it is not necessary for the two to perish and become one, but both to remain bread and body, and for the sake of sacramental unity it is rightly said: 'This is my body', with the little word 'this' pointing to the bread; for it is now no longer bad bread in the oven, but flesh-bread or body-bread, that is, a bread which has become a sacramental being and a thing with the body of Christ. So also of the wine in the cup: 'This is my blood,' with the little word 'this' pointed to the wine; for it is now no longer bad wine in the cellar, but wine of blood, that is, a wine which has come into a sacramental being with the blood of Christ."

Therefore, the objection that the literal version of the words of the Lord's Supper, "This is my body", "This is my blood", results in the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation is quite inaccurate,

1188) Luther's detailed exposition on the *praedicatio identica* [XX, 1026 ff.](#)

because Christ in the predicate does not call bread and body of Christ and wine and blood of Christ, but only Christ's body and Christ's blood. This objection has been raised against the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper not only by the rationalists,¹¹⁸⁹⁾ but also by old and recent Reformed. So also Hodge says: "If the words of Christ are to be taken literally, they teach the doctrine of *transubstantiation*." ¹¹⁹⁰⁾ That this objection is inaccurate becomes apparent when we continue to pay attention to scriptural statements in which the *locutio exhibitiva* is found. Thus Peter says Matt. 16:16 of the Son of Man: "You are Christ, the Son of the living God," and the angel Luke 1:35 to Mary: "The holy one that is born of you will be called the Son of God." As the Son of Man and the Son of Mary is the Son of God, not by transformation of the Son of Man into the Son of God, nor by image of the Son of God by the Son of Man, but by union — in this case, by *unio personalis* — so in the Lord's Supper the bread offered is Christ's body, not by transformation of the bread into the body, nor by image of Christ's body by the bread, but by union of the bread with Christ's body, by *unio sacramentalis*. Hodge errs, then, in giving the following logical and linguistic lesson: "If the bread is literally the body of Christ, it is no longer bread; for no one asserts that the same thing can be bread and flesh at the same time." Hodge himself declares his canon to be in error. He wants, after all, to hold to the Unitarians that the Son of Mary is in the proper sense of the word (literally) the Son of God, that is, "at the same time" both the Son of Mary and the Son of God. He rightly does not admit that in the literal version of the sentence: "The Son of Mary is the Son of God" a transformation of the Son of Mary into the Son of God is taught.

But the Reformed antithesis in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper requires further discussion. It has become customary to see in the difference of Luther and Zwingli concerning the doctrine of the Lord's Supper the reason for the division of the Protestant church at the time of the Reformation. The exposition of the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper has been called difficult. Hodge also says: "It is

 1189) So also Meyer in the commentary on Matt. 26:26 ff. In the doctrine of the Lord's Supper Meyer did not get rid of his rationalism.

1190) *Systematic Theol.*, III, 662, note.

a very difficult matter to give an account of the Reformed doctrine concerning the Lord's Supper satisfactory to all parties." In justifying this difficulty, Hodge says of the Reformed, among others: "They did all they could to conciliate Luther. They adopted forms of expression which could be understood in a Lutheran sense. So far was this irenical (?) "spirit carried that even Romanists asked nothing more than what the Reformed conceded. Still another difficulty is that the Reformed were not agreed among themselves. There were three distinct types of doctrine among them, the Zwinglian, the Calvinistic, and an intermediate form, which ultimately became symbolical, being adopted in the authoritative standards of the Church."¹¹⁹¹⁾ But one need not unduly magnify Reformed discord in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper either. Shedd correctly reminds us: "The difference between Zwingli and Calvin upon sacramentarian points has been exaggerated."¹¹⁹²⁾ It is more a discord in the manner of speaking and especially in the attempted justification of the doctrine than in the doctrine itself. In the main, a great agreement among the Reformed can be readily stated. All agree that Christ's body and blood are not present in the Lord's Supper, but are as far removed from it as heaven is from earth. They all agree that Christ's body and blood are not present in the Lord's Supper, but are as far away from it as heaven is from earth.

There is also general agreement on the ultimate justification for the absence of Christ's body, namely that Christ's body can only ever have a spatial and visible presence, that is, a presence that does not exceed the natural body size (mensuram corporis, dimensionem corporis). reach out. All agree, therefore, that the words of the Lord's Supper are not to be grasped actually, but figuratively. Hodge himself convincingly demonstrates that Calvin and the confessional writings influenced by him do not teach "a real presence" in the sense of the Lutheran Church, just as Zwingli did not.¹¹⁹³⁾ The same proof is given by Shedd.¹¹⁹⁴⁾ The Formula of Concord also testifies to the Reformed that they are united in doctrine despite differences in speech.¹¹⁹⁵⁾ Calvin occasionally speaks of the fact that in the Lord's Supper the Holy Spirit, overcoming all distances, "pours Christ's "flesh and blood"

1191) Syst. Theol., III, 626. 1192) Dogm. Theol, II, 569.

1193) Systematic Theol., III, 628 sqq.

1194) Dogmatic Theol., II, 569 sqq.; III, 464.

1195) M. 646, 1-8. [Trigl. 971, Sol. Decl., VII, 1-8 

1196)

into the believers (*transfundit*), just as if it penetrated the marrow and bone." But this is not an approximation to the Lutheran doctrine — it does not know such a "transfusion" — but it is 1. an increased enthusiasm, because Calvin thinks of an effect that exists only in his imagination, namely of an immediate spiritual effect; 2. an increased effort to accommodate himself to the way of speaking of Scripture and the Lutheran church and to create the impression as if he also teaches a substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper.¹¹⁹⁷⁾ Calvin thereby rejects "real presence" in the sense of Lutheran doctrine, as Hodge correctly notes.

True, however, is this: Although all Reformed agree on the doctrine of absence, and therefore let the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper be only images of the absent body and blood of Christ, they do not agree on the part of the sentence "This is my body" in which the image has its seat, whether in the "that" or in the "is" or in the "my body." Carlstadt tried it with the subject of the sentence, with the "that". Christ had pointed with the "that" (τόυτό) not to the bread presented for the meal, but to his body sitting at the table.¹¹⁹⁸⁾ Luther reports, "Carlstadt made the text thus: 'This is my body' should mean as much: Here sits my body. And the text should stand thus: 'He took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, Here sitteth my body, which is given for you.'" ¹¹⁹⁹⁾ Zwingli disagrees with Carlstadt's exegetical procedure. He rather vigorously declares his *dissensus*. Although he praises the godly opinion expressed in Carlstadt's address of "that," he adds that this version seems "marvelously sacrilegious," since Christ evidently does not speak of his seated body, but calls what is presented for eating his body. Zwingli therefore advises leaving out the "that" and sticking to the following word, "is", especially since, like "that",

¹¹⁹⁷⁾ Read, for example, *Inst.* IV, 17, 19.

¹¹⁹⁸⁾ Carlstadt's "Dialogus or Booklet of Conversations", St. L. XX, 2325. Peter, the layman who plays the role of Carlstadt: "I have always appreciated it in the way that Christ pointed to his body and thus said: This is the body of mine, which is given for you. For Christ did not point to the bread." Likewise p. 2328.

¹¹⁹⁹⁾ St. L. XX, 1771 f

it only has three letters, so in this respect the difference is not that great. "Is" stands for "means", in the sense: The bread, which I give you to eat, means (*significat*) my body. Zwingli writes: "So the whole burden is not on this little pointing word 'that,' but on another, which is not greater according to the letter number, namely, on the little word 'is,' which in Holy Scriptures is taken in not a few places for 'signifies.'" ¹²⁰⁰⁾ Ecolampad and Calvin, however, prefer to take the predicate noun "my body" figuratively, in the sense: the bread I give you to eat is signum corporis, "sign of the body," an image or symbol of my body.

Carlstadt has few imitators healthy with his "Tuto," as Luther briefly names this contrast. Schenkel¹²⁰¹⁾ is seriously angry with Carlstadt. He thinks that Carlstadt's "tasteless assertion" so angered and embittered Luther that he could not appreciate the position of his other opponents. Schenkel says: "It was a misfortune that a man like Carlstadt had to annoy and embitter Luther to the utmost by the insipid assertion that with the words of institution 'This is my body' Jesus had pointed to his then bodily present body. In this way Carlstadt managed to completely remove the presence of the body and blood of Christ from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. ... Hence Luther's tremendous anger ... and the powerful statements in his writing 'Wider die himmlischen Propheten'." Carlstadt's relation of the words "This is my body" to Christ's body sitting at the table, however, is pure arbitrariness.¹²⁰²⁾

But it is just as arbitrary to convert "is" into "means" with Zwingli, because the copula "is" in human address does not have this meaning at all. Luther says quite correctly:¹²⁰³⁾ "This is a certain rule in all languages: where the word 'is' is used in a speech, one is certainly talking about the essence of the same thing, not about its interpretation," that is, where "is"

 1200) "Zwinglis Meinung vom Nachtmahl Christi," reprinted St. L. XX, 470. The Latin text is found in *De vera et falsa religione*, *Opp. III*, 255: *Difficultas universa non in isto pronomine Hoc sita est, sed in voce nihilo, quod ad elementorum numerum attinet, maiore, puta in verbo Est. Nam ea in sacris literis non uno loco pro significat ponitur.* [[Google](#)]

1201) RE.¹ 1, 35.

1202) Cf. Luther XX, 210 ff.

1203) St. L. XX, 909 ff.

is used, one is always talking about what a thing is, not about what it means to another thing. Human language would cease to be a means of communication if "is" were not "is" but meant something else.

"Language 'itself would commit suicide if it could tolerate the idea that the substantive verb shall express not substance, but symbol."¹²⁰⁴⁾ That one has meant and still means that the copula "is" stands in the sense of "means" is the consequence of the spiritual weakness that has been attached to us men since the Fall. The fall of man has exerted an evil influence also on the human logic. And all of us, who belong to the sinful humanity, have high cause to check our logic continuously. But if we use the remnant of logic that remained to us after the Fall by God's goodness, we can see that in the passages of Scripture that are chiefly cited by the Reformers in the controversy over the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, "is" does not stand in the sense of "means." Even a part of the Reformed admits this, as we shall see.¹²⁰⁵⁾ Admittedly, from Zwingli to the present, one has compiled a longer or shorter catalog of scriptural passages in which supposedly "is" stands for "means."¹²⁰⁶⁾ The most important passages are: Joh. 10:9: "I am the door"; Joh. 16:5: "I am the vine"; 1 Cor. 10:4: The rock that followed was Christ. Namely also Luke 8:11: "The seed is the Word of God"; Matt. 13:38: "The field is the world"; Matt. 11:14: "He [John the Baptist] is Elijah"; further Gal. 4:24: "These are the two testaments." Zwingli even thinks that one would become a *blasphemer* (*blasphemus*) if one did not take "is" for "means" in these passages.¹²⁰⁷⁾ But Zwingli's zeal significantly exceeds the quality of his logic. The very passages cited prove that "is" does not

1204) Krauth, Conservative Ref., p. 619. Also Hollaz says very correctly, *Examen, De eucharistia, qu. 7: Copula verbalis "est" non est capax tropi. Si enim copula "est" amiserit suam significationem copulandi vel uniendi praedicatum cum subiecto, ac induerit aliam, tum ipsam quoque propositionem destruxerit, ne amplius sit propositio.* [[Google](#)]

1205) Likewise Meyer on 1 Cor. 10:16, although he adopts the Reformed doctrine for rationalistic reasons: "εστί never means anything but *est*, never *significat*; it is the copula of being."

1206) A catalog in Zwingli, *Opp.* III, 256 ff.

1207) *Ad Ioh. Bugenhagii Pomerani epistola*, *Opp.* III, 606.

stand for "means". When it is said: Christ is the door, is the vine, was the rock, etc., there is, however, a figurative expression (trope) in these sentences. But not in the copula 'is', but in the predicate noun 'door', 'vine', 'rock'. 'Christ' does not mean the door, but is really the door. Admittedly, not a natural door leading, say, from a street in St. Louis to a house situated on the street, but the spiritual door, namely, the door through which men enter God's kingdom. As Christ immediately declares Himself, "I am the door; if any man enter in by me, he shall be saved." The word "door" has become, as Luther puts it, a "new word." But the copula "is" retains its first and only meaning: it goes "to the essence," to what Christ really is, namely, the spiritual door into the kingdom of God. The same is to be said of the other examples. Christ does not mean a vine, but is the spiritual vine on which the spiritual branches, the Christians, hang by faith. Likewise, Christ did not signify the rock, but was really the spiritual rock (πνευματική πέτρα) that accompanied Israel through the wilderness.¹²⁰⁸ Even if they are images, "is" remains is. However, pointing to a picture of Peter, we say, "This is Peter." But we do not mean to say: the picture means Peter, but: That which is depicted in the picture is Peter, or: That is a depicted Peter.¹²⁰⁹ Also here Peter has become a "new word". To the category of images now belong all scriptural passages in which parables (parables) and allegories are present. Christ spoke to the people in parables (εν παραβολαῖς, διά παραβολήs, Matt. 13; Luke 8) and says in the parable or image, "The seed is the Word of God" (Luke 8:11) and, "The field is the world" (Matt. 13:38). Again, the meaning is not: the natural seed means Word of God, but: That which is represented under the image of the natural seed in the parable is God's Word. Likewise, the field does not mean the world, but that which is represented under the image of the natural field in the parable is the world. "Seed" and "field" have become "negated word". The apostle Paul says Gal. 4:22 ff. of Hagar, the maid, and her son and of Sarah, the free woman,

1208) Meyer on 1 Cor. 10:3, 4: "That ἥν here means significabat (so also Augustine, Bengel and several) is assumed quite arbitrarily."

1209) Luther XX, 988, 990.

and her son: "These are the two testaments," the testament of the law from Sinai and the testament of the promise. But thus Paul speaks of Hagar and Sarah, etc., in allegory or figuratively; ἀτινά εστιν ἀλληγορονμενα, that is, speaking allegorically or figuratively.¹²¹⁰⁾ The sense here is also this: That pictured or typically represented by Hagar the maid is the testament of Sinai with its servants, and that pictured and typically represented by Sarah the free woman is the testament of the promise or gospel, which does not give birth to servants but to children.

Luther speaks about the question whether "is" stands in the sense of "means" as follows:¹²¹¹⁾ "To instruct you, as ours, further, you should know that it is a pure poem who says that this little word 'is' means as much as 'interprets'. No man can ever prove it in any part of Scripture; indeed, I will say further, if the enthusiasts in all the languages that are on earth bring a passage in which 'is' means as much as 'interprets,' they shall have won. But they should leave it alone, for it is lacking in the high spirits that they do not rightly regard the art of speech, grammatica, or as they call it, tropus, which is taught in the children's school. This doctrine teaches how a boy should make two or three words out of one, or how he should give one word new usage and more interpretations. So that I prove with some examples: The word flower, according to its first and ancient interpretation, means a rose, lily, violet and the like, which grows and blossoms from the earth. Now if I would praise Christ with one of his praises and see him coming from the Virgin Mary, such a beautiful child, I might take the word flower and make a trope or give a new interpretation and custom and say: Christ is a flower. Here all grammarians or masters of speech say that flower has become a new word and has a new interpretation and is no longer called the flower of the field, but the child Jesus, and that the word 'is' must not become an interpretation here; for Christ does not mean a flower, but he is a flower, but a different flower than the natural one. For thus says the poet Horatius: *Dixeris egregie, notum si callida verbum*

1210) Gerhard, De coena, § 95: Non est tropus in copula, sed allegoricus historiae usus ostenditur. Stock in the commentary on this passage: Per historiam hanc Spiritus Sanctus sublimius quid adumbrare voluit. The mentioned historical facts are types of other things.

1211) St. L. XX, 905 ff.

reddiderit iunctura novum [Google] (*De arte poetica*, v. 47. 48), that is, it is finely spoken when you can well negate a common word. From this one has that one word becomes two or many words, when it gets a different, new interpretation over its common interpretation. For example, flower is another word when it means Christ, and another when it means the natural rose and the like; again, another when it means a golden, silver, or wooden rose. So when one speaks of a miser man: He is a dog; here a dog is called the meager skinflint, and has become a new word from the old word according to the doctrine of Horatii, and one must not make 'signifies' out of 'is'; for the miser is not a figure of a hound. So now one speaks in all languages and negates the words, as if we say: Mary is a dawn; Christ is a fruit of the womb; the devil is a god of the world; the pope is Judas; St. Augustine is Paul; St. Bernard is a dove; David is a woodworm, and so henceforth the Scriptures are full of such talk. And in grammar it is called tropus or metaphor when two things are given the same name for the sake that there is a simile in both of them, and so the same name is one word according to the letter well, but *potestate ac significatione plura* according to the power, custom, interpretation two words, an old and a new one, as Horatio says, and the children know well. We Germans use to put 'right' or 'other' or 'new' with such negated words and say: You are a right dog, the monks are right Pharisees, the nuns are right Moabite daughters, Christ is a right Solomon. Again, Luther is another Hus, Zwingli is another Korah, Ökolampad is a new Abiram. In such addresses all Germans will bear witness to me and confess that [they] are new words and are the same [as] when I say: Luther is Hus, Luther is another Hus, Luther is a right Hus, Luther is a new Hus. So that one feels how in such addresses according to the doctrines of Horatio a new word is made from the previous one, for it does not work nor sound when I say: Luther means Hus, but he is a Hus. In such passages one speaks of the essence, what one is, and not what he means, and makes over his new essence also a new word. So you will find it in all languages, that I know for sure, and so all grammarians teach, and the boys know in school, and you will never find,

that 'is' may mean 'to interpret'. If now Christ says: John is Elias, no one can prove that John means Elias, because it would also be ridiculous that John should mean Elias, since Elias could much rather typify John. And according to Zwingel's art, Christ would have to turn it around and say: Elias is John, that is, he means John. But Christ wants to say what John is, not what he means, but what kind of being or office he has, and says that he is Elias. Here Elias has become a new word and does not mean the old Elias, but the new Elias, as we Germans say: John is the right Elias, John is another Elias, John is a new Elias. Likewise it is also spoken: Christ is a rock, that is, he has a being and is truly a rock, but yet a new rock, another rock, a right rock. Again: Christ is a right vine. Dear, how does it work if you want to interpret this according to Zwingel's conceit: Christ means the right vine? Who then is the right vine that Christ signifies? So I hear, Christ should be a sign or interpretation of the wood in the vineyard? Oh, that would be fine! Why would Christ not have said it this way: The right vine is Christ, that is, the wooden vine means Christ? It certainly is more fitting that a thing should be an emblem of Christ than that He should be a symbol of a thing, since the thing that symbolizes always is lowlier than the thing of which it is a symbol, and all signs are less than the thing they point to, as even fools and children know very well. But Zwingi does not stand on the word '*vera*' in this passage: Christ is the right vine. If he had looked at this, he could not have made an interpretation out of the 'is'. For no language suffers according to reason to say that Christ means the right vine. For no one can say that in this place the right vine is the wood in the vineyard. And so the text forces by power that the vine is here a new word, which means another, new, right vine and not the vine in the vineyard. Therefore 'is' here cannot be an interpretation, but Christ is true and has the nature of a true, new vine. However, even if the text stood thus: Christ is a vine, I do not mean to say that Christ means the vine, but rather that the vine should mean Christ. So also this passage: Christ is the Lamb of God, John 1:29, cannot be understood in this way:

Christ means the Lamb of God, because then Christ would have to be less than a sign than the Lamb of God. But what is the Lamb of God that signifies Christ? Shall it be the paschal lamb? Why doesn't he turn it around and say more fittingly: The Lamb of God is Christ, that is, Paschal Lamb means Christ, as Zwingli interprets? But because the Word of God stands by the word Lamb, it forces by power that Lamb here is another, new word, also means another, new and the right Lamb, which is truly Christ, and not the old Paschal Lamb. And so on, what more examples do they give than: The seed is the Word of God, Luke 8:11 ff; the field is the world etc., Matt. 13:38, they cannot make an interpretation out of the 'is' with good reason, but the children in school say that seed and field are *tropi* or negated words according to the metaphor. For *vocabulum simplex et metaphoricum* are not one but two words. So seed here is not called grain nor wheat, but Word of God, and field is called the world, because Christ (says the text itself) speaks in parables and not of natural grain or wheat. But he that speaketh in parables maketh of common words nothing but *tropos*, new and different words; otherwise they were not parables, where he used the common words in the former interpretation. That there is even a foolish, incomprehensible spirit, who wants to take the words in parables according to a common interpretation, is contrary to the nature and manner of parables; he must then gain by interpretation and trickery." When in the United States the Methodist *Apologete* became very aggressive with the figurative interpretation of the words of the Lord's Supper, Walther wrote in 1848 in the *Der Lutheraner*, p. 93 f.: "Because it also happens very often in the Holy Scriptures that certain things or persons are given names which cannot bear them in the proper sense, it certainly seems to those who are ignorant of the rules of language, at first sight, as if the little word 'is' must very often be taken for 'means'. And unfortunately, since Zwingli, even many scholars who are quite well acquainted with the rules of language have nevertheless dishonestly used the ignorance of the people and cited such passages as: "I am the vine, I am the door, the rock was Christ, John is Elijah," etc. as proof of this. They said: Everyone knows that Christ is not really a vine, not really a door, not really a rock, and that John the Baptist was not really

the old prophet Elijah; this they were only meaning-wise; therefore in all these and similar passages 'is' stands for 'means'. But this conclusion is a fallacy. The words, namely vine, door, rock, Elijah and the like, have a double meaning, namely an actual and an inauthentic one (figurative, figurative, tropical). First of all, vine means a growing plant on which vines grow, which it carries, animates and fills with fruit, from which the refreshing wine is pressed; secondly, a vine is also called all such things with which others stand in the most intimate connection, which are carried, animated and filled with fruit by them. When Christ says: "I am the vine", Christ does not mean: "I am a vine" — it would be blasphemy to say that Christ is the image of an ordinary vine, that is, less than an ordinary vine —; no, Christ rather means: "I am a true, the right vine, not one that stands in the garden, but one that has come from heaven; for with me my believers are so intimately united that from me they are enlivened and filled with fruit. — As for the word 'door', it also has a double meaning; first, as is well known, it means the opening through which one enters a house; second, it also means everything by which one enters something. Now when Christ says, 'I am the door,' he does not mean, 'I signify a door,' but: I am the one through whom alone one can enter the kingdom of grace and honor; I am not the image of this door, but precisely the true, the right door of heaven. — As for the word 'rock', it means, first of all, a large, solid mass of stone consisting of the whole; secondly, this word means everything that stands firm without wavering, and on which one can therefore build firmly and trust. Therefore, when Paul writes: 'The rock that followed was Christ,' he does not mean that a rock followed that signified Christ, but that the fathers had a companion through the desert on whom they relied as on a right, solid rock, and from which they could drink the right, bright, clear, refreshing water as a rock, and that was Christ; therefore Paul also calls Christ not only a rock, but the 'spiritual rock'. But who will say that Christ is not a spiritual rock, but only means a spiritual rock?

— Finally, the word 'Elijah' means, first, the well-known prophet of King Ahab's time, and secondly, a man who rebukes all sin and error with great burning zeal and unusual intrepidity. Now when it is said of John the Baptist: 'He is Elijah,' it is not to say that he signifies Elijah, but that he is a right Elijah, that is, he is a man who with great burning zeal and unusual intrepidity rebukes sin and error. — From this it will hopefully be clear to our readers that from such and similar passages as: 'Christ is the Vine' etc. one cannot prove that the word 'is' in Holy Scriptures ever means so much as 'means'. The main reason, to repeat it briefly, is this, because in those passages there is no address of an actual vine and rock, and no address of an actual door, and no address of the actual Elijah, but all these words are used in a new, changed (tropical), figurative, inauthentic meaning. As certain as it is that Christ is not what the words vine, rock and door indicate in their proper sense, so certain it is that Christ is not merely what these words mean in their tropical sense, but what they really are; namely, that Christ is the divine vine, the door of heaven and the spiritual rock, and John a second Elijah (that is, as Luke 1:17 explains, a man 'in the spirit and power of Elijah'). — The word 'is' therefore always stands firm in Holy Scriptures; therefore, wherever Holy Scriptures say that a thing is this or that, we can also rely on it firmly and without doubt. What would Holy Scriptures be if we could not rely on this little word? Then no truth, not even one revealed in it, would stand firm; in vain would it then stand in the Bible: There is a God, there is a judgment, there is a hell, there is a heaven, Christ is the Son of God, etc.; for if 'is' could be taken for 'means,' who could prevent an unbelieving interpreter of Scripture from also making of God, judgment, hell, heaven, the Son of God, etc., all empty meanings?" In the same vein, another American Lutheran theologian, Krauth, wrote:¹²¹²⁾ "A more dangerous falsity in interpretation than the assumption that the word 'is' may be explained in the sense of

1212) The Conservative Reformation, p. 618 f.

'signify' or 'be a symbol of' is hardly conceivable. Almost every doctrine of the Word of God will melt under it. 'The Word was God' would mean: 'The Word signified, was a symbol of God.' 'God is a Spirit' would mean: 'God is a symbol of the Spirit.' When it is said of Jesus Christ: 'This is the true God,' it would mean that He is the symbol or image of the true God. By it Christ would cease to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and would be a mere symbol of them; would no longer be the Door, the Vine, the Good Shepherd, the Bishop of souls, but would be the symbol of a door, the sign of a vine, the figure of a shepherd, the representation of a bishop. This characteristic use of 'is' is essential to the very morality of language, and language itself would commit suicide if it could tolerate the idea that the substantive verb shall express not substance, but symbol. Creation, redemption, and sanctification would all fuse and be dissipated in the crucible of this species of interpretation. It would take the Bible from us, and lay upon our breasts, cold and heavy, a Swedenborgian nightmare of correspondences. This Socinian and the Pelagian and all errorists of all schools would triumph in the throwing of everything into hopeless confusion, and the infidel would feel that the Book he has so long feared and hated, deprived, as it now would be, of its vitality by the trick of interpreters, could henceforth be safely regarded with contempt. Well might Luther write upon the table at Marburg: 'This is My body'; simple words, framed by infinite wisdom so as to resist the violence and all the ingenuity of men. Rationalism in vain essays to remove them with its cunning, its learning, and its philosophy. Fanaticism gnashes its teeth at them in vain."

Thus we have seen that Zwingli and all who follow him deceive themselves and others when they think that "is" "is not taken for "means" in few places."¹²¹³⁾ Therefore, even among

 1213) Even in the passage Gen. 41:26: "The seven beautiful cows are seven years", this is not provable. Luther and the Lutherans rightly said that if somewhere in the Scriptures the copula "is" stood for "means", it was still not proven that it must also be taken in this way in the words of the Lord's Supper. Luther (XX, 576 f.): "For it is quite a different thing when I say, That may be called so, and when I say, That must be called so and cannot be called otherwise. Conscience cannot rely on the first; but on the other it can." But with good reason also Gen. 41:26 rejects *est* for *significat*. Do not forget that this passage also falls under the category of imagery. It deals with

the older Reformed theologians there was no lack of those who rejected the *est* for *significat*. Thus Keckermann († 1609) says: "Others want the trope to be in the copula. But this cannot be proved either."¹²¹⁴ A greater stir was caused by his objection to *est* in the sense of *significat* by the better-known theologian from Herborn, Johann Piscator († 1625). Piscator had earlier argued very strongly for "is" in the sense of "signifies." He had written, "Metonymy is either in the subject or in the predicate or in the copula of the sentence. Now it is neither in the subject nor in the predicate. So it is in the copula."¹²¹⁵ But when Piscator read the rebuttal of Daniel Hofmann

This is a dream vision, that is, an image that Pharaoh saw in a dream. As we now say of a picture of Luther: "This is Luther", not in the sense: The picture means Luther, but in the sense: The represented in the picture is Luther or a depicted Luther, so we also say of the picture of the seven years, the seven beautiful cows, that they are seven years, namely in the sense: The represented in the picture by the seven cows are the seven years. Luther (XX, 909): "So also the passage from the first book of Moses: Seven oxen are seven years, and seven ears of corn are seven years? Since the text itself says that it speaks of a dream and of a parable or sign of the seven years, the words 'seven oxen, seven ears of corn' must here also be *metaphorae* and new words and be called the same, that these words 'seven years', that therefore these words 'seven years' according to common interpretation and these words 'seven oxen' according to new interpretation are called one and the same. For seven oxen do not mean seven years, but they themselves are essentially and truly the seven years; for they are not natural oxen that eat the grass in the pasture, which are indeed called 'seven oxen' by old, common words. But here it is a new word, and is seven oxen of hunger and plenty, that is, seven years of hunger and plenty. Summa, they may well lead passages and say, Here is interpretation; but they will never prove it in some." Rodatz, in the Rudelbach-Guericke publication (1843, p. 77): "Parables, visions and dreams fall for our consideration openly under one point of view..... Living, natural cows cannot be years, but dream cows, dream images of cows. What was presented to Pharaoh in the dream image were, according to the appearance" (in the picture) "cows, according to the essence years, symbolized by that image, since periods of time as such cannot come to the imagination to the view. Those cows, of course, were not natural, already expired years, but surely years symbolized by a prophetic dream vision; such years they really were, and that, first of all, says that expression: 'Seven cows are seven years.'"

1214) *System. Theol.*, III, 8, Pastor 444; in Scherzer, *Collegium Anti-Calvinianum*, Leipzig 1704, p. 573: *Alii volunt tropum esse in copula, quod et ipsum non potest probari.* In Gerhard, *De coena*. § 76.

1215) Scherzer, l. c., p. 574.

of Helmstedt († 1611), he openly confessed that he had been mistaken in his earlier assertion and declared "that in the copula 'ist' cannot be a tropus" (*in copula est non posse esse tropum*). He therefore retracted his earlier opinion before fighting further, although he clearly felt (*persentisco*) that with this retraction he was inflicting a small wound on himself for the further struggle.¹²¹⁶⁾ Schenkel thinks that Zwingli has probably correctly recognized "the tropical" in the words of the Lord's Supper, but in such a way that "he attaches it somewhat awkwardly exclusively to the copula and proves it with partly very inappropriate biblical examples".¹²¹⁷⁾

But also the transfer of the trope into the predicate noun "body", according to which "body" is supposed to stand for "sign of the body", is based merely on arbitrariness. First of all, Christ does not say: Take, eat; this is my body sign, but: "This is my body" (τό οἰώμα μου). So unanimously do all the sacred writers from whom we have an account of the institution of the Lord's Supper. Matthew: τὸντό ἐστὶ τό οἰώμα μου; Mark: τὸντό ἐστὶ τό οἰώμα μου; Luke: τοῦτό ἐστὶ τό οἰώμα μου; Paul: τὸντό μου ἐστὶ τό οἰώμα. No one employs "bodily sign" for Leib. Luther certainly urges this fact rightly when he writes:¹²¹⁸⁾ "Because the evangelists all so unanimously put these words 'this is my body' in the most simple way, one can assume that there must be no figurative address nor some trope in them. For if there were some trope in it, someone might have touched it with a letter, so that there might have been another text or understanding. Just as they do in other things, where one puts in what the other leaves out. Secondly, Luke describes the body that Christ presents for eating in the Lord's Supper in more detail by adding "which is given for you". But it is not a sign of the body, but Christ's body itself, the body which He took to Himself from the Virgin Mary, that has been given for us.¹²¹⁹⁾ Therefore, there has been no lack of reformers who have

1216) op. cit. 1217) RE4 I, 26. 1218) St. L. XX, 1046 f.

1219) Hollaz, *Examen*, qu. 7: *Neque cadit tropus in "corpus" aut "sanguineum" propter προδιορισμόν, quod pro nobis traditum. Nam id designatur voce corporis et sanguinis, quod pro nobis in mortem est traditum, et in remissionem peccatorum pro nobis effusus est. Iam vero non signum corporis, non tropicum, non figuratum, sed verum et proprium Christi corpus pro nobis in mortem est traditum, et non tropicus, non figuratus, sed verus et proprius Christi sanguis pro nobis peccatorum remissionem est effusus.* [[Google](#)]

have declared the version "body" in the sense of "sign of a body" to be quite impossible. Even "the other Calvin", namely Beza, opposes Oekolampad's and Calvin's "signs of the body". He says that if "body" was to be taken for "sign of the body," it should have been pronounced so as to avoid deception.¹²²⁰⁾ Beza is arguing here just like Luther and the Lutherans. He expressly says that "body" cannot stand for "sign of the body," but must designate the true, substantial, or essential body, because in the words of the Lord's Supper itself "body" is more closely described as the body which is given for you, and likewise the blood is more closely designated by the addition: which is shed for you. Beza also opposes — to mention this immediately — those who, like Calvin and other Reformed theologians, allow themselves to use "the fruit and effect of Christ's death" for Christ's "body" and "blood". Hodge also does this: "Therefore, to receive the body and blood as offered in the Sacrament ... is to receive and appropriate the sacrificial virtue or effects of the death of Christ on the cross."¹²²¹⁾ Even against this substitute Beza says: "It would certainly be too absurd to construe the words body and blood from the fruit and effect of the Lord's death." The absurdity of this version Beza aptly takes thus, "Well, let us put in for these words 'body' and 'blood' that exposition, saying, 'This is the effect of my death which is given for you, and this is my Spirit which is shed for you!' Can there be anything more inconsistent (*ineptius*) than this address? For those words, 'which is given for us,' certainly urge you (*adigunt*) necessarily to understand this of the substance of the body and blood of Christ." ¹²²²⁾

1220) Beza, *Hom. 2. do coen.* (in Gerhard, *L. de coena*, § 76): *Confiteor, hic nullum tropum esse, quia signum proprie exponi necesse fuit, ne falleremur*. [[Google](#)]

1221) *Syst. Theol.*, III, 646.

1222) *Epist. 5. ad Alemannum*, p. 57, ed. Genev. (in Gerhard, § 76): *Nam certe verba illa: "quod pro vobis datur", necessario te huc adigunt, ut de ipsa corporis et sanguinis substantia hoc intelligere cogaris*. [[Google](#)] Cf. Heppes under "Beza," RE.² II, 363, and *Dogmatik d. ref. K.*, p. 469. In his writing against Flacius (*Adv. Illyricum*, p. 127) Beza says: *Non dubitamus, quin per corporis appellationem id ipsum pro nobis assumptum et crucifixum corpus declaretur*. Gerhard adds l. c.. still adds: *Idem agnoscunt Zanchius, Grynaeus, Pezelius, Sadeel, Crellius et Paraeus*. [[Google](#)]

Admittedly, the majority of the reformed teachers think that it is a usage beyond all doubt to use the image or the sign for the thing depicted or signified, and one can allow oneself this trope (signum pro signato or signatum pro signo) without exposing oneself to the suspicion of deception. They disagree on this point with Beza, who says that if "body" should stand for "sign of the body," this should have been said; otherwise the address would amount to deception. Böhl calls out the oriental usage. He says:¹²²³⁾ "The Oriental treats the image or symbol completely equal to the concept itself expressed by it. The symbol lives before him, and no such sharp distinction takes place between the symbol and what it is supposed to mean as with the Occidental." But Böhl does injustice to the Oriental. As flourishing as the imagination of an Oriental may be, he no more puts the picture in the place of the thing depicted than the Occidental and the rest of mankind. If someone says to an Arab, for example, "This is a date," this Oriental thinks of a real, substantial date, because he, like all other people, always first takes the words of human address in their proper meaning. If, after the words: "This is a date", a picture of a date or an illustrated date were held up to him, he would immediately recognize and also say that this was a different thing from what he was first told. And if one wanted to instruct him with Böhl to the effect that the Oriental treats "the picture or symbol completely equal to the concept itself expressed by it", he would consider this either a joke or an insult. He would say that one wanted to deceive him either in jest or in earnest. If we do not want to deceive ourselves and others, we must hold fast: According to the content, there are two completely different statements, if I use the same words: "This is a date", but with "date" I mean a real date on one occasion and the image of a date on the other occasion. Luther countered this to Ocolampadius when he wrote:¹²²⁴⁾ "Therefore Ocolampadius cannot stand with his trope, that he wants to let these two speeches be equally valid: 'This is my body' and 'This is my body's likeness'; for that suffers, no language." Against this it has been objected from the Reformed side that it is,

1223) Dogmatik, p. 568. 1224) St. L. XX, 990.

in order to avoid misunderstandings, not necessary to announce each time that one speaks in the picture or tropically.¹²²⁵⁾ And this has been further justified in this way: If we show someone the picture of a certain person, for example of "Karl", and at the same time say: "This is Karl", then everyone immediately recognizes that it is not about the substantial or real Karl, but about a depicted Karl.¹²²⁶⁾ However, in this case any misunderstanding is impossible. But this comes from the fact that we present and show Karl's picture and thus announce from the outset by showing the picture that it is a question of a picture of Karl, not of the real Karl. If it did not stand by the presentation of the picture that it is a question of a depicted or painted Karl, then everyone would think of the real, substantial Karl at the words: "This is Karl". Therefore, when the Reformed teachers — and they all do this — operate with examples of images (such as: "This is Peter") and bring into the field against the actual version of the words of the Lord's Supper: "This is my body" such passages of Scripture in which one speaks in parables, types and allegories (such as: "The field is the world"), they make use of a method of proof which is based 100 percent on self-deception and deception of others. They commit a *petitio principii*, that is, they assume as a foregone conclusion that the Lord's Supper is an image of the body and blood. They assume as proven what they first want to and should prove.¹²²⁷⁾

1225) Thus Zwingli in his answer to Bugenhagen, Opp. III, 606. Bugenhagen had pointed out that the words of the Lord's Supper were not a dream image or a parable.

1226) Thus Zwingli says in his *Subsidium*, Opp. III, 345: Although we say of an image or statue of Peter, "This is Peter," everyone immediately recognizes that this is not the real Peter, but only an image of Peter. And Zwingli regrets that this argument had not already occurred to him when he wrote his *Commentarius*. He thinks that if he had incorporated this argument into his *Commentarius*, he would have made such an impression that the war would have been over and he would have been recognized as the victor. *Haec sunt, quae vel exciderunt, cum Commentarium acceleraremus, vel postea succurrerunt. Quae si tunc fuissent addita, forsitan impressionem sic iuvisent, ut profligato bello nunc tranquille degeremus.* [Google]

1227) So says Riissen, *Turretini compendium auctum et illustratum*, XVII, 51 (in Heppe, *Dogmatik der ref. K., p. 468*): *Modus loquendi*

In order to expose this deception, we find in the Lutheran teachers the following linguistic exposition, which has been called tedious, but which is nevertheless very necessary: Every word is to be taken in its first, that is, proper, meaning until circumstances present in the context of the address or an explicit explanation compels us to substitute for the proper meaning the figurative or transferred one. Without observance of this principle, human speech would cease to be a medium of communication. Indeed, we would always remain in doubt as to whether a statement was to be taken actually or figuratively, that is, we would not know what the speaker or writer actually meant. Like the interchange of "means" with "is," the interchange of the image with the thing depicted (*signum pro signato ober signatum pro signo*) involves a "suicide" of language. This is why Luther says against Oecolampadius, who wanted to use *signum corporis* for *corpus*: "On the other hand, it is also not true that such a trope of Oecolampadius is in some common address or language in the whole world, and whoever brings me a constant example of this, I will give him my neck."¹²²⁸ In fact, all men, the "Oriental" and the "Occidental," also deal with each other on the principle that they take each word in its first or proper meaning until obviously present circumstances or an explicit explanation compels the figurative version. When we hear the word "door," we think of an opening leading into a house. But when we hear Christ say of himself, "I am the door," we know from Scripture that Christ is not

in omnibus linguis est usitatissimus, quo signatum praedicatur de signo et nomen illius isti datur. [Google] And now Riissen cites all the passages of Scripture in which Scripture speaks in images and parables, and thus believes to have proved that also the words of the Lord's Supper: *Hoc est corpus meum, hic est sanguis meus* are to be understood figuratively. He cites the examples common to the Reformed: *Septem vaccae dicuntur septem anni* (Gen. 41:26). *Ossa dicuntur domus Israel* (Ezek. 37:11). *Quatuor animalia sunt quatuor reges et decem cornua sunt decem reges* (Dan. 7:17. 23. 24; 8:20. 21). *Sic* (Matt. 13:38. 39) *ager est mundus; bonum semen Sunt filii regni, inimicus est diabolus, messis est finis mundi, messorum sunt angeli etc.. Et* (Apoc. 1:20) *septem stellae sunt septem angeli, septem candelabra sunt septem ecclesiae, et cap. 17:9 .septem capita sunt septem montes, decem cornua sunt decem reges, v. 12. Mulier, quam vidisti, est magna civitas, v. 18, etc...* [Google]

1228) St. L. XX, 988.

a natural door leading into a house, but the spiritual door through which men are to enter God's kingdom. The same is true of all scriptural statements in which Christ is called the vine, a rock, the way, the light of the world, etc. Further, when we hear the word "temple" we think of a building of stone, wood, etc. But when Christ says to the Jews, "Break down this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again," the Scripture itself adds by way of explanation, "But he spake of the temple of his body."¹²²⁹ When we hear the word "seed," "field," "harvest," etc., we always think first of natural seed, of a natural field, of a natural harvest. But when we hear from the Scriptures that Christ spoke in parables of seed, field, harvest, etc., we are told that this is not the case. the Scripture itself tells us that these words are used as images or signs to represent other things than they denote in their true meaning. If we apply this to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, we must say that Christ's words, "This is my body which is given for you," must be understood by us in their proper meaning of the body of Christ and not of an image of it, unless Scripture itself told us to think in the Lord's Supper not of Christ's body itself but of an image of his body. Such scriptural statements, however, do not exist. Rather, as we have already seen, the situation is this: 1. All biblical reporters on the institution of the Lord's Supper call what Christ presents with his mouth for eating and drinking in the Lord's Supper Christ's body and blood; no one speaks of an image or sign of Christ's body and blood. 2. We also have in Scripture an authentic apostolic explanation as to whether the words of the Lord's Supper are to be taken actually or figuratively. The apostle Paul also, like Matthew, Mark and Luke, records the institution of the Lord's Supper and the words used in it. But in the apostle Paul there is more. In rebuking the frivolities that had occurred in the Corinthian congregation during the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and in exhorting them to the proper seriousness that befits this celebration, he powerfully confirms that the words "body of Christ" and "blood of Christ" are to be taken in their proper and first sense. He does not call the blessed chalice a sign or

1229) John 2:19-22.

image, but the fellowship of the blood of Christ, and the bread which we break, not a sign or image, but the fellowship of the body of Christ, and further says of everyone who eats of the bread or drinks of the cup of the Lord unworthily, that he becomes guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, and eats and drinks God's judgment to himself, because he does not distinguish the body of the Lord. In view of this explanation of the apostle concerning the gift of the Lord's Supper, the Reformed can only maintain their doctrine of images in such a way that they allow themselves to use the image for the matter, namely, for the fellowship of the body and blood of Christ, the fellowship of the image of the body and blood of Christ or the fellowship of the fruit and effect of the body and blood of Christ. Zwingli freely says, "The tropes must be known by the light of faith," tropos fidei lumine deprehendi oportet.¹²³⁰ But "faith" in spiritual things is a relative term. It must always have a Word of God as its correlate. Where this is missing, there is not Christian faith, but a human imagination. What kind of "faith" is this, stemming only from one's own intuition, which causes Zwingli and all Reformed teachers to assume tropes in the words of the Lord's Supper, although Scripture does not show any tropes in them, would now have to be shown in order to clarify the whole situation.

First, however, for the sake of completeness, it should be pointed out that there has been no lack of such representatives of the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper who do not want to understand individual words, i.e. neither "that" nor "is" nor "body", figuratively at all, but who would like us to think of the whole or the sense of the whole sentence as a symbol. Thus Keckermann thought that in the sentence "This is my body" each individual word must be allowed to stand in its proper sense, but then the whole sentence must be understood in a non-proper sense or as a picture. First of all, this is a great imposition from a logical point of view. If all the individual words of the sentence are to be taken actually, i.e., "bread" is bread, "is" is and "Christ's body" is the body that is given for us, then no man, Keckermann included, can bring himself to grasp what is said in the whole sentence as a mere image.¹²³¹

1230) Opp. III, 606.

1231) Cf. Dannhäuser's criticism of Keckermann's trope in Oneustedt II, 1197: *Absurdus denique etiam ille Keckermannii (quem repetit Combachius, De Euch., c. 11) tropus in tota propositione, ita tamen, ut*

Furthermore: If one looks more closely, it soon becomes clear that Keckermann is not serious about the actual version of the individual components of the sentence. Keckermann addresses at the same time a "union of meaning" (*unio significationis*), which takes place between the bread and the body of Christ. So he actually takes either "is" for "means" or "body" for "bodily sign"; for otherwise his "*unio* of signification" or likeness would not come out. Here the reminder is in place that Luther is right when he says:¹²³²⁾ is certain that Zwingli and Oecolampadius are united in understanding, although the words are different. For the Zwingli says: 'This means my body', is tantamount to Oecolampadius' saying: 'This is a sign of my body'. The German language also exists, and all languages, that it is the same when I say: laughter means joy, and laughter is a sign of joy; that it has no question nor doubt, 'to mean' and 'to be a sign' are one and the same." "Oecolampadius has *figuram corporis*, Zwingli has *significans corpus*; that is one thing." So it certainly is. Even those among the Reformed who say with Oecolampadius and Calvin that the trope is not in the copula but in the predicate noun, who say, therefore, that we must not take "is" for "signifies," but "body" for "sign of body," mean exactly the same thing as Zwingli and comrades meant. Both parties, despite the difference in words, think of the relationship between bread and the body of Christ in such a way that the bread is an image or symbol of the body of Christ. In general it is to be said that all the Reformed pay homage to the so-called "subject trope," no matter where they nominally take the trope, whether in the subject "that," or in the copula "is," or in the predicate noun "body," or even in the whole sentence: "This is my body." All grasp the bread as an image or symbol of the absent body of Christ. Thus, despite the feuds among them, they eventually agree on the words. As Zwingli declares his *significat* thus: *symbolum est, figura est*,¹²³³⁾ namely, the bread is a symbol, an image of the body of Christ, so Calvin also says that the bread is called Christ's body

singula verba maneant propria: totum se. enunciatum est tropicum, totum enunciati proprium, cuiusmodi monstrum in nulla unquam Rhetorica auditum est. [[Google](#)]

1232) [St. L. XX, 782 f. 1086](#).

1233) Opp. III, 607: *Sic docuimus, est pro symbolum est, figura est, significat hic positum esse.*

because the bread is a sign or symbol (*signum aut symbolum*) of Christ's body.¹²³⁴⁾ Also those who, like Keckermann, Zanchi, Bucanus and others, want to transfer the trope into the whole sentence, declare explicitly that they mean: *Panis est symbolum sive signum corporis Christi*. This is especially clear in [Bucanus](#). He says: "The figurative address is not found in the individual words, considered separately and by themselves. For the bread is bread in the proper sense, and the body is not an allegorical, not a tropical, not a figurative, much less an illusory body or phantasm, nor a mystical body, which is the Church, nor a sign of the body, nor the merit of Christ, but body denotes the proper body of Christ (*proprium Christi corpus*); the true body of the Lord is certainly said of the true bread. But the figurative address is found in the whole statement (*attributione*), because the copula binds two things (*disparata*) distinct in essence, which [statement] may be thus resolved: The bread is a symbol or sign of the body of Christ (*panis est symbolum seu signaculum corporis Christi*)."¹²³⁵⁾ We only remind you that with the imposition to figuratively grasp the whole sentence: "This is my body", stops all argumentation again. In the imposition there is a *petitio principii*. That which is first to be proved is assumed to be proved. And then here again the question arises, which we already dealt with earlier: Why, if it is permissible to take a part of the words of the Lord's Supper figuratively, and that in any case the most important part: "This is my body" — why stop halfway and not take all the words and the whole action of the Lord's Supper figuratively? Why not also entirely dismiss bread and the eating of it, and wine and the drinking of it, as external things and external acts, and, like the Quakers, let only the inward, spiritual enjoyment of Christ in the hearts of the believers be pictured by the external process of the first supper? But this has already been pointed out under the section on "The Divine Order of the Lord's Supper." We add here that also

 1234) In the commentary to 1 Cor. 11:24: *Cur hic negemus similem esse metonymiam nomenque corporis pani tribui, quia eius signum sit aut symbolum?* [[Google](#)] Calvin also cites for his "sign of the body" the same writers with which Zwingli proves his "means", *Inst.* IV, 17, 21. 22.

1235) Bucanus, *loc.* 48, p. 693. In Gerhard, *L. de coena*, § 85.

Luther already points out this inconsistency. He says: "Dear, why are the other words not also taken figuratively, and does the trope only go over the word 'is' or 'body'? Or where is there a rule that teaches us which and which do not have to be taken figuratively? For on such doctrine I will also make the words, 'Take, eat, such do in remembrance of me,' tropos, and say: 'take' means to hear, 'eat' means to believe, 'do such things' means to think in the heart."¹²³⁶⁾ Krauth also recalls, "The Word TAKE these interpreters [the Reformed] have usually construed literally, though why an imaginary body or the symbol of a body might not be taken mentally, they cannot say. ... The Word EAT they have interpreted literally, though why the eating ought not to be done symbolically or mentally, to correspond with the symbolical or mental character of the body, they cannot say. Certainly there are plenty of instances of a figurative use of the word 'eat,' while there are none of such a use of the word 'is.' The Quakers are more consistent."¹²³⁷⁾

But we now turn our attention to the "faith" which causes the Reformed to deny the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper and therefore to take the words of the Lord's Supper figuratively. There is a great self-deception on the part of the Reformed and a deception of others when they refer to Scripture for their doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper has its basis not in Scripture, but in a fixed human idea. This is the idea, held against the clear testimony of Scripture¹²³⁸⁾, that Christ, according to his human nature, thus also according to his human body, can have no other than the local and visible presence (*localis et visibilis praesentia*). Not only Luther says: "All their reason stands on the fact that Christ's body must be alone in one place, bodily and understandably", "as a peasant is in doublet and pants" or "as straw in sackcloth".¹²³⁹⁾ Calvin, too, repeatedly affirms that the reason for his dissent from Luther lies on the point stated by Luther. In order to thoroughly refute Luther's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, Calvin wants above all "to refute that foolish

1236) St. L. XX, 1006. 1237) *The Conserv. Ref.*, p. 608 sq.

1238) Cf. the detailed exposition in the doctrine of Christ's person, II, 192 ff.

1239) St. L. XX, 950. 953. 1776.

fiction "*stultum illud commentum*", that the body of Christ has, besides the visible and local presence, also an invisible, non-spatial and supernatural presence. He says: The Lutherans "prate of an invisible presence", ¹²⁴⁰⁾ and asserts in all seriousness that according to human nature no presence may be ascribed to Christ which extends beyond his natural body length (*mensuram corporis, dimensionem corporis*) and allows him to be present in several places at the same time (*pluribus simul locis distrahit*). ¹²⁴¹⁾ Otherwise there would be a calamity. The true humanity of Christ would necessarily be lost. To the true body of Christ belongs necessarily and under all circumstances, "that it is enclosed by space, that it does not reach beyond its dimensions" (i.e. not beyond six feet) "that it is visible. Therefore, away with that stupid fiction which attaches both the spirit of men and Christ to the bread!" ¹²⁴²⁾

In order to clarify the situation between the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, it must always be remembered that within Reformed theology, precisely with regard to the main doctrines of Scripture, humanly devised principles appear outside of Scripture, according to which the statements of Scripture are "interpreted". We encountered this in the doctrine of God's grace. Reformed theologians from Calvin on down to Hodge and Böhl answer the question of whether God intends to make all men saved or only a part of them according to the principle that God's intention regarding the salvation of men is to be judged by the result. They argue: From the fact that not all men are saved, it must be concluded that God does not want to have all men saved

1240) *Inst.* IV, 17, 30: *Garriunt de invisibili praesentia*. [Google]

1241) *Inst.* IV, 17, 19.

1242) *Inst.* IV, 17, 29: *Haec est propria corporis veritas, ut spatio contineatur, ut suis dimensionibus constet, ut suam faciem habeat. Facessat igitur stultum illud commentum, quod tam mentes hominum quam Christ pani affigit! Quorsum enim occulta sub pane praesentia etc.* [Google] In the translation of John Allen the words read: "It is essential to a real body to have its particular form and dimensions, and to be contained within some certain space. Let us hear no more, then, of the ridiculous notion which fastens the minds of men, and Christ Himself, to the bread. For what is the use of this invisible presence," etc. (*Institutes*, etc.)? Translated from the original Latin, and collated with the author's last edition in French, by John Allen. London. 1813. vol. III, p. 426.)

and that Christ's merit does not extend to all men.¹²⁴³⁾ According to this human idea, they then exegete all scriptural statements that read *gratia universalis*. Likewise in Christology. The question whether the divine and the human nature can have real fellowship (*realis communio*) with each other in Christ, they decide according to the principle: *Finitum non est capax infiniti*. According to this axiom, they reinterpret all scriptural statements that refer to the fellowship of natures and the communication of attributes. Likewise with the doctrines of the means of grace. The question whether God works the faith in the gospel or the rebirth through the means of grace arranged by him or without them and beside them, they decide according to the principle: Because the rebirth is an effect of the divine omnipotence, so there is "no place for the use of means" in the rebirth. Thus we also heard from Hodge: "Volumes have been written on the contrary hypothesis; which volumes lose all their value if it be once admitted that regeneration, or effectual calling, is the work of omnipotence."

¹²⁴⁴⁾ From this human idea, the scriptural statements that faith or regeneration come through the means of grace and from the means of grace are reinterpreted into their opposite, as if they read: without the means of grace and apart from them. The same is true here with the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The tyrant with which the Reformed theologians tyrannize the Scriptures and themselves is the fixed idea that according to his human nature only a visible and spatial presence is ever to be ascribed to Christ, and therefore the body of Christ cannot be invisible and non-spatial in the Lord's Supper. Everything that the Reformed object to the presence of Christ's body and blood as expressed in Christ's words is ultimately based on that preconceived idea. That is why Carlstadt thought that when Christ said, "This is my body," he could only have been pointing to his body visibly seated at the table. That is why Zwingli thought that in the words of the Lord's Supper "is" could not be "is" but must mean "means." That is why Oecolampadius and Calvin thought that "body" could not be "body" but must necessarily be taken for "bodily sign." And when the Reformed theologians say of "Christian faith",

1243) Calvin, *Inst. III*, 24, 15. Hodge, *Syst. Theol.*, II, 323.

1244) *Syst. Theol.*, II, 683.

that it does not permit the essential presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, they always mean their article of faith about the only visible mode of being of the body of Christ. Oecolampadius writes against Luther:¹²⁴⁵ "How may you ascribe to us many heads for the sake of such exposition" (namely "whether one interprets the *hoc* thus, another takes the *est* to mean and another seeks another way") ? "As far as I know, the reason of us all is one, that Christ went to heaven with a true body." "Our reason is that the body of Christ is in heaven; it is now certain and not lacking." "Christian truth is that the body of Christ is in heaven with honor and glory." In other words, all the arguments of the Reformed against the essential presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper finally resolve themselves into this "single reason" that only a spatial and visible presence is possible for Christ according to human nature.

Under the dominion of this fixed idea, Calvin, as we already saw with the doctrine of Christ's person, wreaks true murder among the scriptural passages that contradict his idea. Thus, he claims that Christ did not come to the disciples through closed doors (John 20), but through an opening,¹²⁴⁶ and that Christ did not become invisible (*non factus est invisibilis*) before the Emmaus disciples, but only covered their eyes.¹²⁴⁷ At the same time, on this occasion, a number of scriptural teachings come to life. The right hand of God, to which Christ was exalted after his exaltation through the Ascension, is reinterpreted as a circumscribed place, through which Christ, after his exaltation, is now shut off from his church all days until the end of the world.¹²⁴⁸ Thus, the scriptural teachings of Christ's ascension and His sitting at the right hand of God are reinterpreted into the very opposite.¹²⁴⁹ Further, Calvin indirectly ascribes infinity to the world and local extension to God. Only with the presence of these ideas in his mind

1245) Response to Luther's Preface to the Syngramma, [St. L. XX, 591 ff.](#)

1246) *Inst.* IV, 17, 29. 1247) op. cit.

1248) Calvin explicitly states in *Inst.* IV, 17, 30 that the promise: "I am with you always, even to the end of the world" does not refer to Christ even after humanity.

1249) Cf. the sections "The Ascension of Christ" and "Sitting at the Right Hand of God" [II, 382 ff.](#)

can Calvin so persistently assert that through the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence Christ's body is made "infinite" ¹²⁵⁰) and "spread out through heaven and earth" (*diffundi*).¹²⁵¹ Yes, even the greatest and highest thing in Christianity is sacrificed to the delusion of the only spatial and visible mode of being of Christ's body: the incarnation of the Son of God. This is especially clear in Calvin. In order to be able to keep Christ's body and blood out of the Lord's Supper, he declares it to be a quite frightening doctrine that the Son of God everywhere has his human nature with him.¹²⁵² This is the crossing over into Unitarian territory, because with it the unique union that exists between God and man in Christ, the *unio personalis*, is reduced to the *unio mystica* that takes place between God and all believers.¹²⁵³ As a result of the reduction of the *unio personalis* to the *unio mystica*, Calvin, in disputing the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper, also continually allows himself the following argument: Just as the body of other men cannot be in several places at the same time, neither can this be granted to the body of Christ. Calvin virtually establishes the axiom — misusing scriptural passages such as Hebr. 2:14; 4:15 — that, with the exception of sinlessness, we are not allowed to say anything different or more about Christ according to His human nature than we are about

1250) *Inst.* IV, 17, 30: "If we give them (the Lutherans) credit for what they say about the invisible presence, this does not yet prove the infinity (*immensitas*), without which they vainly try to include Christ under the bread. Luther (XX, 965), on the other hand, says: "If the world itself is not *infinitum* or infinite, how can it follow that Christ's body is infinite if it were everywhere?"

1251) *Inst.* IV, 17, 19. In contrast, Luther (XX, 1009): "Oecolampad spins the same sackcloth that Zwingli spins, namely, that Christ's body should be as great as heaven and earth. Is God Himself not so great and wide" (i.e. in local extension), "who is everywhere." Cf. the detailed exposition under the section "The manner of Christ's omnipresence according to human nature," II, 192 ff.

1252) *Inst.* IV, 17, 30: *Quosdam* [the Lutherans are meant] *ita abripit contentio, ut dicant, propter unitas in Christo naturas, ubicunque est divinitas Christi, illic quoque esse carnem, quae ab illa separari nequit.* [Google]

1253) Compare here what has been said about the Christological "suicide" that Reformed theology commits by denying in Christology the fellowship of natures and the communication of attributes, specifically the communication of the divine omnipresence to the human nature of Christ, II, 184 ff. 136 ff. 141 ff. 171 ff.

every other man. If this happens, the true human nature of Christ is lost. Calvin writes: "It pleased God that Christ should become like his brethren in all matters, sin excepted. But what is the nature of our body? Is it not part of its nature to have its certain extent, to be enclosed, grasped, and seen from one place? They [the Lutherans] say, why God cannot cause one and the same body to be in several and different places, not to be enclosed by the place, to lack the visible mode of existence? Insane man, what do you demand from God's power, that he causes a body to be a body and not to be a body at the same time! ... A body must be a body, a spirit a spirit, every thing must remain in the condition in which it was created by God. But this is the constitution of a body, that it is only in a certain place and exists in its extension and in its visible form."¹²⁵⁴) So vigorously does Calvin insist here that we ascribe to Christ according to his human nature nothing else and no more than to any other man! This truly thoroughly nullifies the incarnation of the Son of God and the whole work of redemption. According to Calvin's axiom we would have to say: No other man is God, therefore also not the Son of Mary. No other man is the mediator between


 1254) *Inst. IV, 17, 24: Placuit [Deo], Christ fratribus per omnia similem fieri, excepto peccato. Qualis est nostra caro? Nonne, quae certa sua dimensione constat, quae loco continetur, quae tangitur, quae videtur? Et cur, inquiunt, non faciat Deus, ut caro eadem plura diversaque loca occupet, ut nullo loco contineatur, ut modo et specie careat? Insane, quid a Dei potentia postulas, ut carnem faciat simul esse et non esse carnem! ... Carnem igitur carnem esse oportet; spiritum, spiritum; unumquodque quia a Deo lege et conditione creatum est. Ea vero est carnis conditio, ut Uno certoque loco, ut sua dimensione, ut sua forma constet.* [[Google](#)] John Allen translated these words as follows: "It pleased God for Christ to become in all respects like His brethren, sin excepted. What is the nature of our body? Has it not its proper and certain dimensions? Is it not contained in some particular place, and capable of being felt and seen? And why, say they, may not God cause the same flesh to occupy many different places, to be contained in no particular place, and to have no form or dimensions? But how can they be so senseless as to require the power of God to cause a body to be a body, and not to be a body, at the same time? ... Therefore body must be body, spirit must be spirit, everything must be subject to that law, and retain that condition which was fixed by God at its creation. And the condition of a body is such that it must occupy one particular place, and have its proper form and dimensions."

God and man, therefore not even the man Christ Jesus. No other man has redeemed mankind through the offering of his body and the shedding of his blood, thus also not the man Christ. Calvin thus thoroughly clears up Christ's person and work. And he does this, as said, in order to keep Christ's body and blood out of the Lord's Supper. For to this end he establishes and seeks to support the proposition that Christ's body can only ever have a spatial and visible mode of being.¹²⁵⁵ The same proposition further entails that the Reformed polemic against the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper is a thoroughly untrue one. Because the Reformed, as soon as they hear of the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, always have in mind only their visible and spatial presence, "as the peasant is in his doublet and pants," they allow the Lutherans to teach a local inclusion (*localis inclusio*) of the body of Christ in the bread, or a local coexistence (*consubstantiatio*), or even a physical mingling (*permixtio*) of the bread and the body of Christ. From the same point of view, they give the Lutherans

 1255) Cremer, RE. ³ I, 37: "Admittedly, if Christ is nothing other than any other man, distinguished only by calling and vocational activity, there can be no talk of fellowship with the body and blood of Christ, and the view present in all accounts [of the Lord's Supper] is invalid." But the "view" is different if we hold to the incarnation of the Son of God. If Christ is indeed like every other man, because he also has and retains a true human nature, he is at the same time something else than every other man, namely, the man who is God, who is bound with God into an I, in whom the whole fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily, whose body is God's own body, whose blood is God's own blood, whose blood has this unique quality of being the ransom for the whole world's sin, — if the matter stands thus, we must give to the man Christ, and especially also to his body and blood, the foregoing predicates — they are the predicates of Holy Scriptures —: then the Reformed assertion that the Son of God cannot be with His body and blood in the Lord's Supper appears to be an adventurous assertion. It can only be explained by the fact that thus the "theologizing subject" has forgotten the incarnation of the Son of God, separates the man Christ in his person and in his work from the Son of God, as is the case with Calvin when he asserts of Christ's merit that it does not have sufficient value as the merit of a man, but only receives this value through predestination. (*Inst.* II, 17, 1.)

the predicate flesh-eater, blood-drinker and man-eater¹²⁵⁶) and call the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ, with the Real Presence of the Body of Christ given for us, and with the Real Presence of the Blood of Christ shed for us, a "cyclopean meal" and "thyestial meal"¹²⁵⁷) All this is the consequence of making the proposition of the only visible and local mode of being of the Body of Christ the principle of Scripture interpretation.

We would be misjudging the situation if we thought that the disagreement which unfortunately exists concerning the doctrine of the Lord's Supper has its reason in some obscurity of the words of the Lord's Supper. These words are of such a nature that in all men, "whether they hear them Christian or heathen, Jew or Turk", they evoke exactly the

1256) So also Zwingli. Zwingli is particularly crude in *De vera et falsa religione*. Opp. 11, 555. He proves the absence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper not only from the words: "Flesh is of no use," but also from Peter's miraculous draught of fishes. (Luke 5:8) Because Peter, in the knowledge of his sinfulness, says: "Lord, go out from me," Zwingli ties to this the following instruction concerning the Lord's Supper: "And we should have an appetite to eat Christ naturally like man-eaters (*anthropophagi*)! As if someone loved his children so much that he wished to devour (*devorare*) them! Or as if among all men those who eat human flesh are not considered the most savage." Oecolampadius, who is said to have a worthy way of fighting Luther (RE.² X, 722), also uses the above-mentioned expressions in his answer to Luther's preface to the Syngamma, St. L. XX, 588 ff. The crudest Reformed polemicist was perhaps Beza. Even Heppe, a great admirer of Beza, says RE.² II, 361: To the defender of Lutheran doctrine, Tilemann Heßhusius, "Beza countered in 1560 with two dialogues, one of which he called 'The Carnivores' (*κρεωφαγία*) or 'Cyclops', the other the 'Räsonnierender Esel' (*ὄνος σνλλογιζόμενος*) or 'Sophisten', but unfortunately both of them were full of the most immoderate scorn and derision." To Beza primarily also the Formula of Concord refers when it (662, 67 [*Trigl. 997, Sol. Decl., VII, 67* ]) points out "how unrighteously and poisonously the sacrament revelers mock the Lord Christ, St. Paul and the Church, who have called this oral and unworthy use of duos pilos caudae equinae et commentum, cuius vel ipsum Satanam pudeat, as well as the doctrine of the majesty of Christ excrementum Satanae, quo diabolus sibi ipsi et hominibus illudat, that is, they speak so terribly of it that even a pious Christian should be ashamed to interpret the same".

1257) The mythical generation of the Cyclopes was said to be man-eaters. (Cf. Homer, *Od.* IX, 287 ff.; Virgil, *Aen.* III, 623 ff.) Thyestes ate the flesh of his own son, which his brethren Atreus had set before him. (Cf. Cicero, *Tusc.* III, 12, 26.)

same ideas.¹²⁵⁸⁾ They are also as clear to the Reformed as they are to the Lutherans. Christ's words: "Take, eat, this is my body, which is given for you" generated not only in Luther's, but also in Zwingli's, Oecolampadius's and Calvin's mind the idea — not of an image of Christ's body, but — of the true, essential body which Christ gave in death. The difference between Luther on the one hand and Zwingli and comrades on the other hand is only that the former say yes to Christ's words, the latter say no to Christ's words. They justify their "no" with the impossibility of the presence of the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper and the impossibility with the idea, generated without Scripture and against Scripture, that according to human nature no other than the local and visible presence can be given to Christ. The same is to be said of more recent theologians who teach essentially Reformed doctrines of the Lord's Supper. Also for Meyer's Reformed position¹²⁵⁹⁾ it is decisive that he thinks that the presentation and reception of the essential body and blood of Christ at the first supper sets the "absolutely impossible". After he has decided the matter for the reason of the "impossibility", "is" has to put up with the "symbolic version".

By the way, the Reformed themselves actually admit in more than one way that they do not have their doctrine of the Lord's Supper from Scripture. This concession lies first in the explanation that the Lord's Supper words are to be interpreted according to the passage John 6.¹²⁶⁰⁾ Since John 6 is not about the Lord's Supper at all, as most of the Reformed themselves admit,¹²⁶¹⁾ so is the

1258) Luther [XX, 1005](#).

1259) Cf. commentary on Matt. 26:26 ff. Likewise [Nitzsch-Stephan, Ev. Dogmatik, p. 668](#).

1260) Hodge, [III, 622](#), cites John 6 as an explanation of the words of the Lord's Supper, 1 Corinthians 10:16, and only includes passages that do not deal with the Lord's Supper but with the spiritual union (*unio mystica*) of the believers with Christ.

1261) Cf. Strong, [Syst. Theol., p. 965](#); David Brown in *Commentary, Critical and Explanatory*, on Joh. 6; Calvin in *Commentary on Joh. 6:54*. Zwingli, *Opp. III*, 241: [Deprehendimus eos penitus errare, qui Christ toto isto capite putant quicquam de sacramentali cibo loqui](#). But he insists that after the words not dealing with the Lord's Supper, the words of the Lord's Supper must be expositioned. Thus already in the much-mentioned letter to Matthew Alberus of 1524, *Opp. III*, 593, but especially *Opp. II*, 1, 447.

use of this passage to determine the doctrine of the Lord's Supper an actual explanation that the doctrine thus formed is not taken from Scripture, but from one's own thoughts. This is in the nature of things. Because in the passages which do not deal with the Lord's Supper nothing stands about the Lord's Supper, the thoughts which we form about the Lord's Supper on the basis of such passages are merely our own thoughts. And if we now interpret the scriptural passages that deal with the Lord's Supper according to these thoughts, we are actually substituting our own thoughts for the teaching of Scripture. And if we still maintain that the doctrine we present is the doctrine of Scripture, we speak the untruth and deceive ourselves and the audience. It has been rightly pointed out that the procedure of wanting to take a doctrine from the passages of Scripture that do not deal with this doctrine belongs to the area of the devil's temptations, as we can clearly see from the temptation of Christ. The issue between Christ and the devil was whether it was scriptural for Christ to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple.¹²⁶²⁾ The devil said yes and gave the scriptural proof from Ps. 91:11: "It is written: He shall command his angels over thee, that they may keep thee in all thy ways." Christ said no and proved his no with Deut. 6:16: "Again, it is also written: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." The difference between the devil's and Christ's proof of Scripture is that Christ cites a passage that deals with the fall that occurred, while the Scripture passage cited by the devil does not refer at all to throwing oneself down from the temple, but to walking in the ways ordered by God.

Since John 6 has become so prominent in the proceedings on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, a few words about this passage are in order.¹²⁶³⁾ According to text and context it is completely impossible to understand John 6 of the Lord's Supper. The whole communion apparatus is missing in this passage, which all biblical reporters (Matthew, Mark, Luke and St. Paul) do not fail to describe. In John 6 Christ does not take bread, give thanks, break it and give it to the people and says: Take, eat, this is my body,

1262) Matt. 4:6: βάλε σεαυτὸν κάτω.

1263) For the history of the exposition of this passage, one can read Luthardt in Zöckler's commentary, further Keil on this passage, Harleß, Zeitschr. für luth. Theol. 1867, p. 115 ff., Calov in *Biblia Illustr.* on this passage

which is given for you. Neither is John 6 mentioning a cup that Christ takes, gives thanks, gives to the people and says: "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the New Testament, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. But that Christ in John 6 speaks with such a strong emphasis of the eating of his body and the drinking of his blood is explained by the context. Christ fed the people, the five thousand, with five barley loaves and two fish. The Jews have a desire for such a Messiah. They want to make him king, and when he eludes them, they follow him to the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. They seek earthly bread from Christ. Christ rebukes them with the words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you: Ye seek me not because ye saw signs, but because ye did eat of the bread, and were filled." He tells them to seek that bread that is for eternal life. Then he very definitely calls himself the life-giving bread that came down from heaven, and he describes faith in himself as what God wants above all things from men. This faith in his person Christ represents under the image of eating and drinking: "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." It does not occur to the Jews that Joseph's son, whose father and mother they know, should be the bread of life come down from heaven. Christ, however, does not take back his address, but increases it to the effect that his flesh, which he will give for the life of the world, is the living bread. When the Jews murmured about this and said, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Christ finally increased his address to the point that he denied life to anyone who would not eat his flesh and drink his blood. He thus inculcates the truth, so necessary to the Jews and to all of us, that he is the Savior of the Jews and of the world, not by offering bodily food and earthly goods in general, but by his suffering and death for the redemption of man's guilt of sin. John 6 is one of the most powerful passages of Scripture in which faith in Christ's satisfactio vicaria is inculcated as necessary for the attainment of salvation. At the end, Christ directs the address back to the beginning: "This" (namely, Christ in his vicarious satisfaction) "is the bread that came down from heaven; not as your fathers

ate manna and died. Whoever eats this bread will live forever." Luther reminds us that¹²⁶⁴) these words [John 6] should not be forced upon the sacrament of the altar, for whoever interprets it in this way does violence to the gospel. There is no letter in this gospel that would grant the sacrament of the altar.¹²⁶⁵) Why should Christ remember the sacrament here, if it was not yet instituted? The whole chapter from which this gospel is taken speaks of nothing else than spiritual food, namely faith. For the people followed after the Lord, and wanted to eat and drink again, as the Lord himself indicates: so he takes a cause from the bodily food they were seeking, and speaks throughout the whole chapter of spiritual food, as he said: 'The words that I speak are spirit, and are life.' Thus signifying that for this reason he fed them [bodily], that they should believe in him; and as they have partaken of bodily food, so they also should partake of spiritual food." What Christ says in John 6 about the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood should provoke us to believe "that this bread, his flesh and blood, taken from Mary the Virgin, was given to us so that he might taste death and suffer hell in our place, and the sin which he had never committed as his own sin. "Of this spiritual supper" — Luther continues — "the whole New Testament addresses, and especially here John in the 6th chapter." The sacrament of the altar, however, does not become unnecessary because of this, as especially Oecolampadius thought, but serves in a special way the spiritual meal through faith. In the sacrament of the altar Christ gives his body and blood also for oral eating and drinking, so that the faith in the heart of the Christian may be the more certain that Christ's body is also given for him and Christ's blood is also poured out for him. It is a part of the untrue polemic of the Reformed that they present the matter as if the Lutherans by the oral reception of the body and blood of Christ were making the spiritual meal more difficult. Just the opposite is the case. The Lutherans teach the oral doctrines so that the spiritual meal is thereby

1264) St. L. XI. 1143.

1265) It is also a completely useless question (Bengel etc.) whether Christ Joh. 6 did not at least think about the Lord's Supper. We can only judge Christ's thoughts when he reveals them to us in his words.

awakened and strengthened. As Luther answers in the Small Catechism to the question: "How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things? 'Given and poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.' Which words are next to bodily eating and drinking as the principal thing in the sacrament, and he who believes the same words has what they say and what they are, namely, forgiveness of sins." In the "Christian Questions with Their Answers," Luther asks the question, "Why do you want to go to the sacrament?" and his answer is, "That I may learn to believe that Christ died for my sin out of great love, as has been said; and after that also learn from him to love God and my neighbor." ¹²⁶⁶⁾

That they do not take their doctrine of the Lord's Supper from Scripture is further revealed even more clearly by those among the Reformed theologians who partly declare that the words of the Lord's Supper are not to be particularly taken into account in determining the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and partly downright assert that the words of the Lord's Supper are not to be used at all as proof of the right doctrine of the Lord's Supper, because these words are disputed. Thus Zwingli, after struggling with the interpretation of the words of the Lord's Supper in the sense of the absence of the body and blood of Christ, says: "But we here desire that no one be annoyed in the anxious inquiries of the words" (namely, the words of the Lord's Supper); "because we do not put our foundation in it, but in the one word: 'The flesh is not at all profitable'; which word alone is firm enough to compel that 'is' be put in the place for 'signifies' or 'signifies' or 'is a sign'." ¹²⁶⁷⁾ But because John 6 does not speak of the Lord's Supper at all

1266) Shedd, however, thinks (*Dogm. Theol.*, III, 464) that if Luther in the Small Catechism insists so energetically on the belief in the words: "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins", then this is a proof that Luther and the earlier Lutheran confessions "substantially adopted this spiritual view of the Supper", namely the view of the merely spiritual enjoyment of the body and blood of Christ in the Supper. Only in later times — the Saxon Visitation Articles of 1592 are mentioned — had the Real Presence been so strongly emphasized and the merely spiritual enjoyment by faith rejected. This is proof that Shedd's view of Luther's position in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper has no connection with historical reality.

1267) Zwingli's Opinion of the Night Supper of Christ, St. L. XX, 477. The Latin text Opp. III, 260: *Volumus autem in his anxiis verborum.*

and also specifically in the words v. 63: "The flesh is of no use", Zwingli's explanation that he does not find the "reason" for his doctrine in the words of the Lord's Supper, but in the words: "The flesh is of no use", is factually equivalent to the explanation that his doctrine is not taken from the Holy Scriptures, but comes from his own imagination.¹²⁶⁸⁾ We have the same admission in Zwingli's confession that he had entertained the opinion of the figurative version of the words of the Lord's Supper before he knew in which word of the sentence the image was to be placed.¹²⁶⁹⁾

excussio[n]ibus, ut nemo se offendi patiatur, non enim eis nitimur, sed hoc uno verbo: „Caro non prodest quicquam”, quod verbum firmum satis est ad evincendum, quod est hoc loco pro significat vel symbolum est ponitur.
 [Google]

1268) In reference to the words Joh. 6:63: "It is the spirit that makes alive; the flesh is of no use" Beza says in a kind of despair: Quantopere sit hic locus variis expositionibus exagitatus, vix credibile est. But the fault is not in the words of Christ, which are truly clear enough in their meaning determined by wording and context. In these words "flesh" cannot be understood of the flesh of Christ, since by the contrast in which it stands to "spirit" it is fixed in the meaning of the "carnal nature" of man, and in what immediately follows unbelief is described to the words of Christ as an expression of the flesh: "The words that I speak, they are spirit, and are life. But there are some among you who do not believe." The reference to Christ's flesh further contradicts the broader context, since Christ previously refers to his flesh as so useful that he declares it to be the right food, v. 55, without which no one can have life. Cf. also Hengstenberg on this passage That it was possible to think of Christ's flesh in the words "flesh is of no use" is evidence that party fanaticism sets aside all rules underlying the understanding of human address. Luther (XX, 823, 824, 826): "So their other best matters is the passage Joh. 6:63: 'Flesh is of no use', which Oecolampadius praises as being his iron wall. ... Christ, whenever he speaks of his flesh or body in the Scriptures, adds the word 'my' and says: 'My flesh', 'my body', as he says in the same chapter, John 6: 'My flesh is the right food'. Again: 'If you do not eat of the flesh of the Son of Man', etc. ... So the iron wall is surrounded by a little word, which means: 'mea', 'my'. For since it does not stand, My flesh is of no use, but absolutely, Flesh is of no use, we have gained that it cannot be understood of Christ's body. For since he himself does not add, 'My flesh,' it is forbidden to amend his words and add anything to them, even if we do not understand it of his flesh. Secondly, that they may not prove by some letter that flesh here is called Christ's flesh."

1269) Opp. III, 606: *Videbam τροπικῶς (lictum esse: Hoc est corpus meum, sed in qua voce tropus lateret, non videbam.* [Google] Zwingli reports here

Finally, it should be mentioned in this context that Zwingli also refers to a heavenly dream apparition for his *est* in the sense of *significat*.¹²⁷⁰⁾ He reports that he could not find any examples for his "is" in the sense of "signifies" except in the parables. "There still remained," he says, "an exceedingly difficult enterprise (*conatus*), namely, to furnish examples which would not be bound by any parable."¹²⁷¹⁾ We therefore began to reconsider everything, to consider everything anew. Nevertheless, nothing presented itself as an example other than what had already been presented in the *Commentary*" (meaning the *Commentarius de vera et falsa religione*) "or what presented itself was similar to it. But when the thirteenth day came — I tell true things, and such true things that, if I want to conceal them, conscience compels me to pour out (*effundere*) what the Lord communicated to me, although it is not hidden from me how great opprobrium and laughter I expose myself to —, When, I say, the thirteenth of April dawned, I seemed to be fighting anew with an enemy writer in a dream with great annoyance, and to have become so dumb that I could not say what I knew to be true, because my tongue failed me. ... Then, as if from a machine" (από μηχανής, a device from a theater stage) "a counselor seemed to be there — whether he was black or white, I do not remember, because I am recounting a dream — who said: weakling (*ignave*), why do you not answer him what is written Ex. 12:11: It is Passover, that is, the passing of the Lord (*est enim Phase, hoc est transitus Domini*). Immediately at this appearance I become lively and jump out of my camp. First I carefully examine the passage in the Septuagint and preach about it powerfully (*pro virili*) before the whole congregation. This sermon ... dispelled all fog among all candidates of the Holy Scriptures [students], who until then still doubted because of the hindrance from the parable, and it happened that ... the number of those who were looking for garlic and the

also that he had become acquainted with "this precious pearl" *est pro significat* through the writing of a Dutchman (Honijs is meant). Only it had remained hidden to him to which word this pearl was to be attached.

1270) *Subsidium de eucharistia*, Opp. III, 341 sqq.

1271) In parables it is declared from the outset that one speaks in images. "The kingdom of heaven is like (ὡμοιωθήν) a man," etc. Matt. 13:24.

fleshpots of Egypt looked back, probably became much smaller." These latter words give us exclusion about how Zwingli came to the new deception. He was looking for weapons against Luther. For when he addresses people who looked back after the garlic and flesh pots of Egypt, he meant to mock Luther's alleged Roman leaven in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. So God let it happen that his imagination or his black, respectively white guest deceived him. Zwingli uses his *significat* Ex. 12:11 just as arbitrarily as in the passages discussed earlier.¹²⁷²⁾

1272) The words Ex. 12:11 belong to the passage in which the divine institution of the Passover meal is reported. The words read: "So you shall eat it: Around your loins you shall be girded, and your shoes shall be on your feet, and staves in your hands, and you shall eat it as those who hasten away" (כֶּחָזֵן [HEBREW], in hasty flight, hastening); "for it is the Lord's Passover" (פֶּסַח ה' הָיָא לֵיהֶנָּה [HEBREW]). Zwingli refers "it" to the Passover Lamb, פֶּסַח [HEBREW] to the sparing passing over of the children of Israel (which it can also denote), gains the phrase, "The Passover Lamb is the (sparing) passing over of the Lord," and then takes it in: The Passover lamb signifies the sparing passing of the Lord. (Opp. III, 343: *Est aliter quam dictum est accipi nequit, videlicet pro symbolum est aut figura. Ut sit sensus: Comeditis festinanter! Est enim symbolum sive figura praeteritionis Domini.* [[Google](#)]) Luther remarks on the same passage ([St. L. XX, 786](#)): "When Moses says: 'Eat quickly, it is the Lord's Passover,' Zwingli cannot prove that it means the paschal lamb. Because one answered soon thus: 'Eat hastily, it is the Lord's Passover', as we say in German: Eat flesh, because it is Sunday; drink water, it is Friday. Here no one will force out of me that flesh means Sunday, or water means Friday. So also here: 'Eat in haste, for it is the Lord's Passover,' that is, it is the day the Lord went into Egypt," etc. Also Krauth says of "It [is] the Lord's Passover": "The 'it' does not refer to the Lamb, but to the whole transaction which takes place with girded loins and the eating of the lamb. The 'it' is used indefinitely, as we would say, 'Let us gather round the cheerful hearth, let us light up the children's tree, for it is Christmas.' The reason of the name 'Passover' follows in the twelfth verse: 'It is the Lord's Passover. For I will pass through the land.' " ([Conserv. Ref., p. 617.](#)) So by more recent exegetes also Keil in the commentary on this passage. But even if we refer with Zwingli the words, "It is the Lord's Passover," not to the Passover meal or feast, but to the Passover lamb, Zwingli's *significat* does not come out. The saying: "The Passover lamb is the (sparing) passing of the Lord" is then analogous to Joh. 11:25: "Christ is the resurrection and the life." Christ does not mean the resurrection and the life, but Christ is really the resurrection and the life. In Christ, or where Christ is, there is the resurrection and the life for men

As to the assertion, further, that the words of the Lord's Supper, because they have become the subject of dispute (τὸ κρινόμενον), are no longer usable for the determination of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper,¹²⁷³⁾ one should hardly think that such an assertion could ever be made in earnest. Apart from the fact that Christians are hereby expected to renounce the whole of Scripture as the source and norm of Christian doctrine, because all passages of Scripture dealing with a certain doctrine have in fact been drawn into dispute, imagine a number of theologians who wish to negotiate the right doctrine of the Lord's Supper, but who undertake from the outset not to cite the Scriptural words concerning the Lord's Supper as proof of the right doctrine of the Lord's Supper. This goes even further than the pope, who has all doctrines "in the shrine of his heart", but still refers to the Scriptures for the sake of appearances. According to the rule, however, that the words of the Lord's Supper are not to be cited as proof of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, one also renounces the pretense that the doctrine thus formed is scriptural. Rather, the rule is a direct demand that Scripture be set aside entirely and that the doctrine of the Lord's Supper be drawn merely from the "inwardness" of man, as Luther puts it. Luther presents the naive character of the demand to renounce the Scriptural words of the Lord's Supper in a picture like this: The scriptural words,

so that whoever believes in Christ lives and does not die. So we would also have the statement in Exodus 12:11: The Passover lamb is the sparing or passing of the Lord. The meaning is then this: With the Passover lamb the children of Israel were spared God's judgment, so that when God saw the blood of the Passover lamb on the houses of the children of Israel, he passed them by with his judgment.

1273) Cf. the quotations in Gerhard, *De sacra coena*, § 79: *Bullingerus et Tigurini in libro contra Iacobum Andreae, fol. 45, postulant, verba coenae non amplius pro fundamento allegari, quia sint τὸ κρινόμενον. Idem repetunt Calvinus in admonit. ult., p. 240, consid. communef., p. 15 et 188, Witakerus, De script. qu, 5, c. 9, Orthod. consensus, c. 7, f. 161: Manifestus est abusus verborum coenae in probando eo, quod ex verbis in quaestione vel controversia est. Daniel Burenus, Consul Bremensis, anno 1560 in conventu publico dicebat, Lutheranos pro sua sententia nihil quidquam proferre posse praeter tria impotentia verba. Quod dubio procul ex Peter Martyre didicit, qui in dialogo de natura human., f. 127, hisce verbis nos alloquitur: Semper visi estis minus, quam par est, sapere, cum pro dogmate absurdo et mutili sic laboretis, ned pro eo tuendo quidquam habeatis nisi Christi τὸ πρῶτον: "Hoc est corpus meum."* [Google]

which deal with a certain doctrine, are for the Christian, as the only source of knowledge for this doctrine, so also the only weapon in the fight against the false teachers. If, in a dispute over the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, the Christian is not to use the scriptural words dealing with the Lord's Supper as evidence, the situation is as if, in a worldly war, the enemy asks me before the battle begins to hand over my weapons.¹²⁷⁴⁾

Finally, the following fact should be remembered: Although the Reformed, Zwingli and Calvin included, declare the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper to be an appalling and pernicious abomination — they call the Lutherans carnivores, etc., as we unfortunately had to remind¹²⁷⁵⁾, and Calvin ascribes to them "a bewitchment of the devil" (*diaboli incantatio*) —¹²⁷⁶⁾, they nevertheless wanted and still want to unite with Luther and the Lutheran church, even in the face of unresolved differences. This fact irrefutably proves that they were not certain of their doctrines from Scripture. But they lacked certainty because

 1274) Luther writes XX. 780. 782: "It is the arrogance of the wretched devil who mocks us by such enthusiasts in this great matter, that he pretends to be instructed with Scripture, so far as to put Scripture out of the way beforehand or to make his conceit of it. It is as if I were to strip a man of his weapons with cunning words, and in exchange give him painted weapons made of paper like his own, and then offer him defiance, so that he would strike me with them or defend himself against me. O that would be a bold hero, whom one should spit at and throw out with lungs to the village, where he would do it seriously, or would only be a good carnival laughter, where it would be shame. Likewise, these enthusiasts do the same to us, wanting to change the Scriptures from natural words and meaning into their words and meaning, and then boast that we do not have Scriptures, so that the devil may have his laughter at us, or rather that he may safely strangle us as the defenseless. But against this only one word serves out of measure, that is, no; so they stand like butter in the sun. Let us now judge between us, not only Christians, but also heathens, Turks, Tartars, Jews, idols and all the world, to which part it should be due that he proves his text. ... This, then, is the sum of it, that we have for ourselves the clear, bare scripture, which thus saith, Take, eat; this is my body: and it is not needful for us, neither shall it be enjoined upon us, to write upon such a text (though we may do it abundantly), but let them bring up scripture, which thus saith, This signifieth my body, or, This is the sign of my body."

1275) p. 345, 383.

1276) Calvin, *Inst.* IV, 17, 23. Likewise IV, 17, 19: *Horribili fascino Satan dementavit eorum mentes.*

they based their doctrine not on Christ's words but on a human interpretation of them. Melancthon reports about the conversation in Marburg:¹²⁷⁷⁾ "The opponents did not want" (in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper) "to depart from their established faith, but desired that Dr. Luther should accept them as brethren. Dr. Martin did not want to agree to such a thing in any way, and he also spoke harshly to them, saying that he was very surprised how they could consider him a brethren, if they otherwise considered their doctrine to be right; it was a sign that they did not greatly respect their cause." Melancthon expresses his own opinion in the following words:¹²⁷⁸⁾ "They have been very anxious to be called brethren by us. Behold their folly! Although they condemn us, yet they desire to be thought brethren by us. We have not wished to oblige them in this matter. I am entirely of the opinion that if the matter had not yet been brought in, they would not raise such a great tragedy."

4. Overview of the relationship of the various communion doctrines to the text of the communion words. [^]

It has become quite common custom to attribute the differences in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper to different "expositions" of the words of the Lord's Supper. This, however, is not quite accurate talk. We speak more correctly when we say that Luther did not "interpret" the words of the Lord's Supper at all, but left them standing as they are. In contrast, however, the Roman and Reformed doctrines are based on extensive and very abundant "exposition" of the words of the Lord's Supper.

Let us realize how much "exegesis" Christ and the Apostle Paul would have had to use to express the Roman doctrine. Even the word "bread" would have required significant exegesis. Christ should have said something like: Though I take bread as you see, I bless it and present it to you to eat. Also, later my evangelists and apostles will explicitly mention bread as present in my Supper. But you do not have to take my and their words as they are. Do not think, therefore, that there is still real or substantial bread in the Lord's Supper. There is only the outward appearance of the bread.

1277) St. L. XVII, 1949 f.; *Corp. Ref. I*, 1102.

1278) Letter to Joh. Agricola, 12 Oct. 1529. St. L. XVII, 1956; *Corp. Ref. I, 1107*.

The whole substance of the bread is changed into my body.¹²⁷⁹⁾ Further, though I say: "Take and eat, this is my body." By this, however, you could get the idea that my body is really only meant to be eaten in the Lord's Supper. But that would not be the right understanding. My body is not only to be eaten, but also to be kept, to be presented for worship, and especially to be carried around solemnly in processions.¹²⁸⁰⁾ Furthermore, although I say: "Drink ye all of it." By this, however, one could get the idea that also the chalice should be given to all participants in the meal ordered by me. But this again would not be the correct conception. The ordinary Christian people have enough at one figure. Also you must consider that there is a "concomitance", whereby my blood is already contained in the offered body, so that the cup becomes really superfluous.¹²⁸¹⁾ Finally, do not forget the following, which is the most important thing about the Lord's Supper: I do say, 'This is my body, which is given for you,' and, 'This is my blood, which is poured out for you.' Therefore, if you were to stick with what I was saying, you would have to come to the idea that you would be completely reconciled to God through the gift of my body and the shedding of my

 1279) *Trid.* De sacrosancto eucharistiae sacramento, can. 2: Si quis dixerit, in sacrosancto eucharistiae sacramento remanere substantiam panis et vini una cum corpore et sanguine Domini nostri Iesu Christi negaveritque ... conversionem totius substantiae pomis in corpus et totius substantiae vini in sanguinem, manentibus dumtaxat spevorebus panis et vini ...: anathema sit. [Google]

1280) *Trid.*, I. c., can. 7: Si quis dixerit, non licere sacram eucharistiam in sacrario reservari, sed statim post consecrationem adstantibus necessario distribuendum [scil. to eat]; aut non licere, ut illa ad infirmos honorifice deferatur: anathema sit. Can. 4: Si quis dixerit, peracta consecratione ... non esse corpus et sanguinem Domini nostri Iesu Christi, sed tantum in usu, dum sumitur, non autem ante vel post, et in hostiis, - quae post communionem reservantur vel supersunt, non remanere verum corpus Domini : anathema sit. Can. 6: Si quis dixerit, in sacrosancto eucharistiae sacramento Christ non esse cultu laetiae, etiam externo, adorandum ... neque in processionibus ... solemniter circumgestandum vel non publice, ut adoretur populo proponendum, et eius adoratores esse idololatrias: anathema sit. [Google]

1281) *Trid.*, I. c., cap. 3: Verissimum est tantundem sub alterutra specie atque sub utraque contineri, can. 3: Si quis negaverit ... sub unaquaque specie et sub singulis cuiusque speciei partibus, separatione facta, totum Christ contineri: anathema sit. [Google]

blood, and that the offering of this body and blood of mine in the Lord's Supper would have the primary purpose to assure you of the forgiveness of your sins and to awaken and strengthen faith in my atoning sacrifice offered on the cross. But that would be a completely perverse conception. Notice well and do not pass by the fact that the Lord's Supper is not primarily a means to commemorate my atoning sacrifice and to distribute the forgiveness of sins acquired by me, but my representative on earth, the pope, will make priests, and these priests — only they can do it — will offer in the Lord's Supper continuously my body and my blood "without blood", thus offering a "true and proper" "sacrifice of atonement" for you and thereby giving forgiveness of sins to present and absent, living and dead, and helping in "other needs".¹²⁸²⁾ These and more "expositions" of the words of the Lord's Supper would have been necessary to convey the Roman concepts of the Lord's Supper.

But the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper also requires a significant amount of "exegesis." Christ would have had to comment on his words like this: It is true that my words, "Take, eat, this is my body," are to the effect that I call for eating with the mouth. But do not think that my body is here on earth in the Lord's Supper and for eating with the mouth (oralis manducatio). As far as heaven is from earth, so far is my body from the Lord's Supper and from your mouth. What I actually mean by the words: "Take and eat, this is my body" is this, that you should lift yourselves up to heaven with the mouth of your faith and there eat my body spiritually by faith.¹²⁸³⁾ Further, when I say to you, "Take

1282) *Trid., 1. c., De sacrosancto euch. sacram., can. 5: Si quis dixerit, praecipuum fructum eucharistiae esse remissionem peccatorum, anathema sit. De sacrificio missae, can. 1: Si quis dixerit, in missa non offerri Deo verum et proprium sacrificium, anathema sit. Can. 3: Si quis dixerit, missae sacrificium tantum esse laudis et gratiarum actionis aut nudam commemorationem sacrificii in cruce peractum, non autem propitiatorium, vel soli prodesse sumenti, neque pro vivis et defunctis, pro peccatis, poenis, satisfactionibus et aliis necessitatibus offerri debere: anathema sit.* [Google]

1283) Consensus Tigurinus, cap. 25: *Tametsi philosophice loquendo supra coelos locus non est, quia tamen corpus Christi, ut fert humani corporis natura et modus, finitum est et coelo, ut loco, continetur, necesse est,*

and eat, this is my body, which is given for you", this reads, however, as if you do not receive a symbol or image of my body, but the body, which is given away for you. But you must interpret my words according to the axiom that my body can always have only a visible and local presence and does not reach beyond the natural body size. Since you cannot see my body in the Lord's Supper and cannot grasp it with your hands, you must think of the word "my body" only as an "image of my body".¹²⁸⁴⁾ The apostle Paul would also have had to comment significantly on his statements about the Lord's Supper if he had wanted to evoke Reformed ideas about the Lord's Supper in his readers. He would have had to declare himself in more detail in this way or in a similar way: True, I say that the cup is the fellowship (κοινωνία) of the blood of Christ, and the bread the fellowship (κοινωνία) of the body of Christ. From the words as they read, however, you might come to think that in the Lord's Supper Christ's body is present with the bread and Christ's blood with the wine, and all who partake of this meal receive Christ's blood with the cup and Christ's body with the bread. To this fellowship between the bread and the body of Christ, and between the wine and the blood of Christ, are also my further words: "Whosoever eateth unworthily of this bread, or drinketh of the cup of the Lord, is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." But in order to come to the understanding of my words, you must give room to various thoughts apart from and beside them, such as: "Flesh is

a nobis tanto locorum intervallo distare, quanto coelum abest a terra. Cap. 21: Nam quum signa hic in mundo sint, oculis cernantur, palpentur manibus, Christus, quatenus homo est, non alibi quam in coelo, nec aliter quam mente et fidei intelligentia quaerendus est. [Google]

1284) Calvin, Inst. IV, 17, 19: *Nos talem Christi praesentiam in coena statuere oportet ..., quae nec mensuram illi suam auferat vel pluribus simul locis distrahat. ... Haec enim naturae humanae veritati non obscure repugnant. — Confess. Anglicana.* (Niemeyer, Pastor. 598): *Cum naturae humanae Veritas requirat, ut unius eiusdemque hominis corpus in multis locis simul esse non possit, sed in uno aliquo et definito loco esse oporteat, idcirco Christi corpus in multis et diversis locis eodem tempore praesens esse non potest. Et quoniam, ut tradunt sacrae literae, Christus in coelum fuit sublatus et ibi usque ad finem seculi est permansurus, non debet quisquam fidelium carnis eius et sanguinis realem et corporalem, ut loquuntur, praesentiam in eucharistia vel credere vel profiteri.* [Google]

no good." ¹²⁸⁵⁾ Furthermore, why is it at all necessary for the body and blood of Christ to be in the Lord's Supper, since believers without the Lord's Supper already have everything by faith, and the Church of the Old Testament also had only images of Christ's sacrifice and the grace of God. ¹²⁸⁶⁾ Also, it would obviously detract from the glory of Christ if he "attached his body to the bread" and thereby left heaven. ¹²⁸⁷⁾ Nor should we forget the fright that the disciples would have received if they had not immediately applied the necessary exegesis and converted "body" into "sign of the body." ¹²⁸⁸⁾ At the same time, the general rule must always be kept that Christ's Body can only have a local, and visible presence under all circumstances. ¹²⁸⁹⁾ On the basis of these thoughts you will understand all my statements, which refer to a presence of Christ's body in the Lord's Supper, from an absence of the same and believe only an image of the body in the Lord's Supper. ¹²⁹⁰⁾ That the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper is really based on these "expositions" of the words of the Lord's Supper is proven by the enclosed quotations.

1285) Thus Zwingli in the above-mentioned words: "We do not put our reason in it" (namely, not in the words of the Lord's Supper), "but in the one word: 'The flesh is not useful at all.'" (St. L. XX, 477.)

1286) Thus Hodge (III, 647) summarizes Calvin's position: "To preserve the consistency of the great Reformer, his language must be interpreted as to harmonize with the two crucial facts for which he so earnestly contends; first, that believers receive elsewhere by faith all they receive at the Lord's table; and secondly, that we Christians receive nothing above or beyond that which was received by the saints under the Old Testament, before the glorified body of Christ had any existence."

1287) Calvin, *Inst.* IV, 17, 19: *Nos talem Christi praesentiam in coena statuere oportet, quae nec panis elemento ipsum affigat, nec in panem includat, nec ullo modo circumscribat, quae omnia derogare coelesti eius gloriae palam est.* [[Google](#)]

1288) Calvin, *Inst.* IV, 17, 23: *Nisi enim apostolis venisset in mentem, panem vocari figurate corpus, quia symbolum esset corporis, turbati haud dubie fuissent re tam prodigiosa.* [[Google](#)]

1289) Calvin, *Inst.* IV, 17, 29: *Haec est propria corporis veritas, ut spatio contineatur, ut suis dimensionibus constet, ut suam faciem habeat. Facessat igitur stultum illud commentum, quod tam mentes hominum quam Christ pani affigat!* [[Google](#)]

1290) Calvin in the explanation of the *Consensus. Tig.* (Niemeyer, p. 217): *Axioma* sumimus, quod sine controversia receptum est *inter omnes pios*: quoties de sacramentis agitur, rei signatae nomen ad signum metonymice solere transferri. [[Google](#)]

In contrast, the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper is based on the words of the Lord's Supper themselves, not from a glossing of them. It allows "bread" to be bread, "is" to be is and "body" to be Christ's body, "which is given for us". The Reformed have objected to this,¹²⁹¹ that Luther, the Lutheran Confession, and the Lutheran teachers speak of a "sacramental union" (*unio sacramentalis*) in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, which takes place between the bread and body of Christ and the wine and blood of Christ. The Scriptures, however, do not address a *unio sacramentalis*. Admittedly, the expression "*unio sacramentalis*" does not stand in Scripture. But the thing signified by the expression is as clearly taught in Scripture as, for example, the ὁμοούσιος. Christ calls the bread which he presents in the Lord's Supper his body, which is given for us. Now because the bread is not transformed but remains bread, as Scripture tells us, and because the untransformed bread is also the body of Christ, as Scripture also tells us, Scripture teaches a binding or *unio* of the body of Christ with the bread, and this *unio* Luther and the Lutherans call the *unio sacramentalis* because it is proper to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The expression is completely adequate. It does not relate factually "accessory" to the words of the Lord's Supper, as has been said quite correctly in modern times, but expresses quite exactly what is said in the words of the Lord's Supper. "This *unio*," says Majus, "is quite unique and has its incontrovertible foundation in the words of institution, when Christ presents the bread and says: 'Eat, this is my body,' and presents the cup and says: 'This is my blood.'" ¹²⁹² The expression "sacramental union" rejects, on the one hand, the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation, which substitutes for "bread" a sham, and, on the other hand, the Reformed doctrine of image, which substitutes for "body" a symbol of the body. The expression does not imply a deviation from the words of the Lord's Supper, but documents — in contrast to the contrary behavior of the Roman and Reformed churches — the unbreakable adherence to the words as they read. The Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper is also in exact agreement with the explanation that the apostle Paul gives in 1 Cor. 10 and 11 on the occasion of the celebration of the Lord's Supper in the Corinthian congregation also about the nature of the Lord's Supper.

1291) Cf. also Calvin, *Inst.* IV, 17, 20.

1292) *Synopsis theol. christ.* 1708, p. 185.

The apostle, as we saw above in another connection, very emphatically inculcates upon the Corinthians, who treated the Lord's Supper lightly, that for the partakers of the Supper the blessed cup sets "the fellowship (κοινωνία) of the blood of Christ," and the broken bread "the fellowship (κοινωνία) of the body of Christ."¹²⁹³ so that everyone who unworthily eats or drinks becomes guilty of the Lord's body and blood, because he does not distinguish the Lord's body (μη διακρίνων το σώμα τον Κυρίου). Even in these apostolic exhortations about the right disposition in which Christians should drink "the cup of the Lord" (ποτήρων Κυρίου) and partake of the "table of the Lord" (τράπεζα Κυρίου), the Lutheran doctrine of the "Real Presence" is so clearly expressed that the rationalist Rückert is right when he says that one can deny the Real Presence only by rejecting the authority of the apostle Paul.¹²⁹⁴ Admittedly

1293) The first meaning of κοινωνία is of course fellowship (*communio*). Whether in the New Testament it can also mean communication (*communicatio*), which some affirm (Ebeling), others deny (Cremer), need not be examined here. Here, at any rate, it is "fellowship," as Luther translated it. This is what the context demands. Just as fellowship with demons is present through participation in the sacrificial meals of the heathen, so fellowship with the blood of Christ is present through partaking of the cup of the Lord's Supper. Incorrectly Meyer remarks on 1 Cor. 10:16, that Luther takes κοινωνία not as "fellowship" but as "communication." Where Luther translates, he grasps κοινωνία as "fellowship," as his Bible translation and e.g. XX. 236 prove. That he also addresses the communication of the body of Christ in the exposition of the meaning of the passage, is due to the fact that he who holds to the *communio corporis*, thereby also teaches the *communicatio corporis*. If the bread is the fellowship of the body of Christ for all who partake of the Lord's supper, for worthy and unworthy alike, then of course the body of Christ is communicated through the bread.

1294) The Lord's Supper. Its nature and history in the ancient church. 1856. p. 236. 241 f. 297. Luther's words on 1 Cor. 10:16 are well known: "On top of these four mighty passages we have another, 1 Cor. 10:16, which reads thus: 'The cup of consecration which we consecrate, is it not the fellowship of the blood of Christ?' The bread which we break, is it not the fellowship of the body of Christ?' This is indeed, I think, a passage, indeed a thunderbolt on Dr. Carlstadt's head and of all his rabbles. The passage has also been the living remedy of my heart in my contestation over this sacrament. And if we had no more passages than this one, we could strengthen all consciences sufficiently with it and strike all opponents mightily enough." (St. L. XX. 235.) In positive exposition, Luther says on 1 Cor. 10:16: "Notice that Paul has made bright and clear

Luther also confesses that he was tempted according to his flesh to interpret the words of the Lord's Supper differently than they read, because he saw that he "could have given the papacy the biggest trouncing with it. "But," he adds, "I'm trapped, can't get out, the text is too powerful there and won't let words tear it out of my mind." ¹²⁹⁵⁾ "The word they shall let stand" characterizes Luther's position not only toward Rome but also toward the Reformed fellowships. Both opponents, in spite of the difference in the results, form one front against Luther and the Lutheran church in principle also in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, insofar as both do not let the scriptural words of the Lord's Supper come into effect. This fact has been rightly pointed out by the Lutherans. Also Krauth writes:¹²⁹⁶⁾ "It is worth noticing that, widely as *Romanism* with its Transubstantiation, and *Rationalism*, with its Symbols, differ in their results, they run into their error by the same fallacious principle of interpretation, each applying it with the same arbitrariness, but to

 saying: 'The same bread which we break is the fellowship of the body of Christ'. Do you hear, my dear brethren? The bread that is broken or distributed with portions is the fellowship of the body of Christ: it is, it is, it is (he says) the fellowship of the body of Christ. But what is the fellowship of the body of Christ? It cannot be otherwise than that they which take the broken bread, every man his portion, take in the same the body of Christ." (If one adds what Luther says to the four accounts of the Lord's Supper (232 ff.) and later (240 ff.) about Paul's warning that those who eat and drink unworthily become guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, because they do not distinguish the body of the Lord, one will have to judge that already in these remarks of Luther against Carlstadt all Reformed interpretations of the words of the Lord's Supper are clearly shown as reinterpretations of them. If Meyer thinks in regard to 1 Cor. 11:27 that Paul's words about becoming guilty of the body and blood of Lord prove neither the absence nor the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, and even speaks of "sophistry" on Luther's part, he (Meyer) forgets that Paul's very words, according to which those who eat and drink unworthily become guilty of the body and blood of Christ, refer to the presence of the body and blood of Christ. And what the words refer to can also be proved from them. Meyer would also admit this if he had not decided with himself that the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper was impossible. But it is decidedly going too far when Meyer expects other people to interpret the words of the apostle Paul according to his (Meyer's) opinion.

1295) De Wette II, 577; St. L. XV, 2050.

1296) The Conserv. Ref. p. 626 sq.

different objects. The *Romanist* wishes to do away with Scripture testimony in regard to the bread and wine; and, although they bear their name *before* the Lord's Supper, *during* the Lord's Supper, and *after* the Lord's Supper, he insists that there is neither bread nor wine there, but only their accidents. While our Lord says: "This is My body/ the Romanist, in effect, makes it: This seeming bread is no longer bread, but has become, has been transubstantiated into, My body. He deserts the letter and reaches transubstantiation. The *Rationalist* wishes to retain the bread and wine, and therefore holds that what the Scripture *calls* bread and wine *is* bread and wine; but he wishes to do away with the Scripture testimony in regard to *the body and blood*; and although the Scripture says that of that which the Savior tells them to 'Take, eat,' He declares most explicitly, 'This is My body'; and of that which He tells them to drink, He says, 'This is My blood/ — though it says that the bread is the communion of His body and the cup the communion of His blood, — though it declares that the guilt of the heedless communicant is that he does not 'discern the Lord's body,' and that he that eateth and drinketh unworthily is guilty of the body and blood of Christ; in the face of all this he insists that there is in the Lord's Supper only the shadow, image, or sign of the body and blood of Christ, not the true body and true blood. With what face can a Rationalist meet a Romanist, or a Romanist meet a Rationalist? No wonder that the Rationalist, after all, is less violent against Romanism than against the pure doctrine of our Church.¹²⁹⁷⁾ There is the secret affinity of error between them; and Romanism does not so hate Rationalism, Rationalism does not so hate Romanism, as both hate unswerving fidelity to the Word of God, that the Romish and rationalizing modes of interpretation are nearer to each other than either is to the Lutheran is admitted by both Rationalists and Romanists. The rationalizing interpreters make it one of the commonplaces of objection to the Lutheran view that it has less in a literal

1297) Thus Calvin explicitly says in his polemic against the Lutheran doctrine (*Inst.* IV, 17, 30): "I am not addressing the Papists, whose doctrines are more tolerable or at least more modest (tolerabilior vel saltem magis verecunda est). But some people" (the Lutherans are meant) "are carried away by the controversy, that because of the union of natures in Christ they say: Wherever the divinity of Christ is, there is also his flesh, which cannot be separated from the divinity."

interpretation of the Scripture to sustain it than the Romish view has: that is, the Romish view is less decisively opposed than the Lutheran is to rationalistic modes of literal interpretation."

But what about the objection of the Reformed that the Lutherans do not keep you to the words of the Lord's Supper as they read? This objection is found throughout both the old and the newer Reformed theologians. Calvin takes peculiar pains at this point to portray the Lutherans as participes criminis.¹²⁹⁸⁾ Hodge also says in regard to "giving up the literal sense," "That is done by one part as well as by the other."¹²⁹⁹⁾ The following examples are primarily cited as evidence for this assertion:

1. The Lutherans understand by the "cup" not the vessel, but the wine contained in the cup, thus metonymically contentum pro continente. Hodge says, "When Christ says, 'This *cup* is the New Testament,' it is admitted that the cup is used metonymically for the *wine* in the cup." To be sure, the Lutherans admit this. But in doing so they stay exactly with the Scripture words about the Lord's Supper, because Christ is said to drink from the cup—not the vessel of the cup—"Drink ye all of it," πίετε ἐξ αὐτόν πάντες.¹³⁰⁰⁾ And it is also still explicitly reported that the disciples followed Christ's instruction and drank not the vessel but from the vessel: καί ἐπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες.¹³⁰¹⁾

2. The Lutherans use the expressions "in, with, and under the bread" to designate the presence of the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper. Hodge also opines¹³⁰²⁾ following the procedure of the old Reformed: "That makes the language figurative, and the literal interpretation, the main, if not the only, prop of the Lutheran doctrine, is given up."¹³⁰³⁾ This objection is quite unobjective, because it entirely brushes aside the point at issue. It does not include — even the Reformed admit — any change of the text and no abandonment of the

1298) *Inst.* IV, 17, 20. Further in the explanation to the *Consensus Tig.*; in Niemeyer, p. 216.

1299) *Syst. Theol.*, III, 662. 1300) Matt. 26:27.

1301) Mark. 14:23. 1302) *op. cit.*, p. 662.

1303) Calvin, *Inst.* IV, 17, 19: *Quamquam praecise urgent literam; „Hoc est corpus meum“, postea tamen deflectunt a rigore ac tantundem valere dicunt atque corpus Christi esse cum pane, in pane et sub pane.* [Google]

literal version of the words of Scripture if we express the meaning expressed in the words of Scripture in other and more words. This is "exegesis" in the right sense of the word. Even the Reformed do not admit that they abandon the literal version when they paraphrase the meaning of a Scripture statement in more and different words. Hodge himself¹³⁰⁴⁾ paraphrases the sense of "is" (ὁ ὢν) in the words John 1:18: "He who is in the bosom of the Father" thus: He who is, was, and ever shall be in the bosom of the Father, i. e., most intimately united with Him." In this, however, Hodge is by no means willing to admit that he understands the scriptural passage "figuratively" by this paraphrase. He has borrowed the assertion that the Lutherans, with their "in, with, and under the bread," make "figurative language" of the Lord's Supper words from Calvin and others, without testing it for its truth. Luther already addressed the objection appropriated by Hodge. He writes:¹³⁰⁵⁾ "But that the false spirit blames us for not remaining on the words and one mind ourselves, because we say that the words 'This is my body' are to be understood thus: under the bread is my body, or: in the bread is my body, etc., I answer: The lying spirit knows well that he does us wrong here. ... I have well said in my booklet that those who say in common speech: under the bread is Christ's body, or: in the bread is Christ's body, are not to be condemned, because with such words they confess their faith that Christ's body is truly in the Lord's Supper. But by this we do not make another, new text; neither do they want such their words to be the text, but remain on the one text. For Paul says: 'Christ is God,' Rom. 9:5, but 2 Cor. 5:19: 'God was in Christ,' and yet both places are each in his mind simple and certain, and to that end not contrary." Likewise, the dogmatists speak out about the "in," "with," and "under."¹³⁰⁶⁾

1304) Syst. Theol., I, 473.

1305) St. L. XX, 899 f.

1306) Quenstedt II, 1201 sq: *Nulla sequela: : „Ubi explicatio τὸν πητόν est, ibi πητόν esse desinit.“ Sic enim nullus interpres, nullus commentator Scripturae τὸ πητόν servaret; τὸ πητό non derogant aequipollentia, synonyma grammatica, paraphrases oratoriae et interpretationes theologicae. Is vero τὸ πητόν relinquit, imo literae contradicit, qui simplicem literae sensum in oppositum figuratum transformat. [Google] Whoever makes "symbol of body" out of "body" changes the "text", because body and symbol of the body are two different things.*

3. To prove that Lutherans also abandon the literal sense, Hodge continues: "If the words of Christ are to be taken *literally*, they teach the doctrine of transubstantiation. And, "If the bread is *literally* the body of Christ, it is no longer bread; for no one asserts that the same thing can be bread and flesh" (should read: the body of Christ) "at the same time." Hodge thus suggests that because Lutherans reject transubstantiation, they too thereby abandon the literal meaning of the words of the Lord's Supper. This argument has already been discussed in detail in the description of *locutio exhibitiva*.¹³⁰⁷⁾ It has also already been shown that Hodge himself declares this argument null and void, because he wants to hold on to the doctrine of Christ's person, that the Son of Mary is literally and without all transformation and at the same time the Son of God (Luke 1:35). So he refuses the argument: If the words of Luke 1:35 are taken literally, they teach the transubstantiation of the Son of Mary into the Son of God, and he does not accept the argument: If the Son of Mary is literally the Son of God, then at the same time he is no longer the Son of Mary. Rather, Hodge wants to hold with the Christian Church that one and the same subject can be Mary's Son and God's Son "at the same time." The Reformed theologians make it very difficult to understand the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper even in a historically correct way. We find in connection with the point just discussed in Hodge the remark, "Lutherans themselves cannot avoid saying and admitting that the bread in the Lord's Supper is the body of Christ." He proves his remark from Luther's Small Catechism and with a quotation from Krauth's *Conservative Reformation*. The proof is entirely correct. But that the bread *in the Lord's Supper* is Christ's body is not merely admitted by the Lutherans; it is precisely what they teach and hold against the Reformed. The bread in the Lord's Supper is really Christ's body not by transformation but by virtue of sacramental union (*propter unionem sacramentalem*), that is, because by Christ's word: "This is my body given for you" Christ's body is bound to the bread in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Just as the Son of Mary is the Son of God not by transformation of the

1307) p. 352 ff.

man into God, but because of the personal union (*propter unionem personalem*). This and nothing else is also inculcated by Krauth in the words quoted by Hodge. But Hodge does not deal with the quotation in an entirely factual way. He cites from Krauth the words, "Just as it would be blasphemy to say, 'Man is God,' and is yet literally true of Christ, 'This man is God,' so would it be blasphemy to say, 'Bread is Christ's body,' and yet it is literally true, 'This bread is Christ's body.'" ¹³⁰⁸ What Krauth is saying, and really saying, is this: Outside the Personal Union of God and Man in Christ, however, it would be blasphemous to say, "Man is God," but within the Personal Union of God and Man in Christ it is right to say, and on the basis of Scripture we must say, "This man is God." Likewise, outside the sacramental union of bread and body of Christ in the Lord's Supper, however, it would be blasphemous to say, "Bread is Christ's body," but within the sacramental union of bread and body of Christ in the Lord's Supper, it is literally (literally) true: "This bread is Christ's body." But Hodge blurs this relation to the personal union in Christ and the sacramental union in the Lord's Supper in two ways. First, he omits Krauth's words immediately following, "*This* man is God, personally because of the personal union, and *This* bread is the body of Christ sacramentally because of the sacramental union." Second, Hodge erases from Krauth's words he quotes the underlining by which Krauth sharply marks the relation to personal union in Christ and sacramental union in the Lord's Supper. Krauth thus underlines, "*This* man is God," namely, this one certain man Christ, and "*This* bread is Christ's body," namely, the bread in the Lord's Supper. Hodge erases these underlinings. Thus he destroys the clarity of Krauth's exposition and prepares an obstacle for himself to understand the Lutheran doctrine even historically correctly.

4. Perhaps most widely held is the claim that Luther and the Lutheran Church do not prove the Real Presence both from the words of the Lord's Supper and from the doctrine of Christ's Person, specifically from the communication of the divine omnipresence to Christ's human

1308) [Conserv. Ref., p. 609.](#)

nature.¹³⁰⁹⁾ That the very opposite is historical truth has already been explained in detail in the doctrine of Christ's person under the special section "The Communicated Omnipresence and the Holy Supper".¹³¹⁰⁾ The proof was led both from Luther and from the very emphatic explanation in the preface to the Book of Concord. There it was further demonstrated whence it came that Luther, in the controversy over the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, treats so extensively and thoroughly the doctrine of Christ's Person and especially of Christ's omnipresence according to the human nature. This came from the fact that Zwingli and comrades claimed that the doctrine of Christ's person, especially the articles of the Ascension and of sitting at the right hand of God, made it necessary to think not of the presence but of the absence of Christ's body in the words of the Lord's Supper: "Take, eat, this is my body," because Christ, according to his human nature, could have no other presence than the visible, spatial one, not extending beyond his visible and spatial body length. Luther and the Lutheran Confessions then prove against this strange Christology that on the part of the Reformed a falsification of the Scriptural doctrine of the Person of Christ also comes to light. They take it that not men but the Holy Scriptures ascribe to Christ, according to human nature, at least a threefold mode of being: the visible or spatial (*praesentia localis, circumscriptiva*), the invisible (*praesentia invisibilis, definitiva*) and the non-spatial divine (*praesentia divina et repletiva*). We add here only that at this point it is quite unseemly to speak of "subtleties" ["finesses"] which are beyond the faith of Christians, If Christians do not know the expressions *praesentia localis, praesentia definitiva, praesentia divina sive supernaturalis*, yet they know and believe the thing signified by these expressions. When they read Scriptures like Joh. 4:4: "Christ had to travel through Samaria", they think of the *praesentia localis*. On the other hand they read Joh. 20:19 ff. that Christ came through closed doors (τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων) to the disciples,

 1309) So also the *Admonitio Neostadiensis*, p. 94; in Gerhard, *L. de s. coena*, §79: *Illi [the Lutherans], postquam diu verba, verba, verba sonuerunt, cum urgentur, ut reddant rationem suae glossae, confugiunt ad ubiuitatem* [Google].

1310) II, 210 ff.

1311) Loofs, RE.³ .S I, 66.

they think of the *praesentia illocalis sive definitiva*. When they finally hear or read Eph. 4:10: "He ascended above all heavens to fill all things" and Matt. 28:20: "I am with you always, to the end of the age", they think of the *praesentia divina sive supernaturalis*. All the theologians who address here "subtleties" that are incomprehensible or unbelievable to Christians, transfer their own deficit in Christian knowledge to the knowledge of Christians who simple-mindedly believe God's Word.

5. The differences in the wording of the communion reports. ^

The differences in the reports, even if they call them small, cause not small difficulties for modern theologians.¹³¹²⁾ They feel called upon to determine which of the four reporters (Matthew, Mark, Luke, Paul) presents the original words, that is, reports just the words (*ipsissima verba*) that Christ used at the institution and first celebration of the Lord's Supper. Regarding the result of this effort, Cremer says:¹³¹³⁾ "Which are the *ipsissima verba of Iesu Christi* cannot be determined." Some report this negative result with perceptible satisfaction. They see in it a confirmation of their assumption that the boundaries between the Word of God and the Word of man in Scripture cannot be precisely determined. In other words, they see in the discrepancies in the wording of the communion accounts a proof against the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.¹³¹⁴⁾ For the older theologians who hold to the inspiration of Scripture, this question does not exist. Some attribute the differences to the intention of the Holy Spirit, who edited the original words according to His pleasure, as He did with the quotations from the Old Testament.¹³¹⁵⁾ The others hold for the fact that all four reports present original words. They declare the slight differences in the wording by the assumption that Christ at the first distribution of the Lord's Supper to His twelve

1312) Schnedermann on 1 Cor. 11:24. 25. 1313) RE. ³ I, 35.

1314) Thus Kahnis, *Dogmatik* I I, 666 ff. In Baier I, 102.

1315) Thus Luther says, St. L. XIX, 1104, "that the Holy Spirit has diligently arranged that no evangelist agrees with the other in the same words. Cf. my treatise in L. u. W. 1886, p. 77 ff.: "Die Form der alttestamentl. Zitate im N. T."

disciples did not always repeat the same words, but changed the words somewhat in the course of the distribution. One will have to admit that this explanation can also be heard. It is also found in some of the more recent ones. Thus Nösgen says: "Jesus, in repeating the words of the Lord's Supper on the evening of the institution, will not have pronounced them in a stereotyped form." ¹³¹⁶⁾ Meyer objects: Christ "certainly said the few meaningful words only once for all in this moment of painful emotion. Only this corresponds to the melancholy and consecration of the situation."¹³¹⁷⁾ But this is so unconvincing that one could also conclude the opposite from the "painful emotion".

What then are the differences? If we compare the accounts in terms of their wording, it turns out that in the words referring to the bread, all the accounts go directly to the essence of the Lord's Supper. They all refer to the body of Christ as the communion gift. Matthew and Mark: *τοντό ἐστί τό σῶμά μου*; Luke: *τοντό ἐστί το αῶμά μου το ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον* ; Paul: *τοντο μου ἐστί το σῶμα το ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν κλόμενον*.¹³¹⁸⁾ With regard to the cup, the statements in Matthew and Mark also go directly to the nature of Holy Communion, that is, they designate directly the blood of Christ as the Communion gift, Matt. 26:28,

1316) Neutest. Offenb. I, 545. Cf. also Thomasius, Dogmatik III, 2, 62. Even apart from inspiration, I consider the assumption very improbable that Luke, for example, probably followed Paul, but substituted *κλόμενον* for *διδόμενον*. It is not likely that Luke would have allowed himself this interchange, especially since Paul says: *Ἐγὼ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου, δ καὶ Μαρτέδωχα ὑμῖν*. As is well known, it has also been negotiated whether the shorter or the longer accounts are to be taken as the original ones. It is *a priori* improbable that any reporter allowed himself shortenings or lengthenings of the words of the Lord's Supper.

1317) Commentary on Matthäusev. ⁶, S. 544.

1318) The *κλόμενον* is text-critically contested. It is in \aleph^* [HEBREW] ABC*, it is found \aleph^c [HEBREW] D^b ; D* has *θρυπτόμενον*, others *διδόμενον*. Findlay judges in *The Expositor's Greek Test*: "The three participles are various attempts to fill up a seeming ellipsis." Meyer: *κλόμενον* is "rightly suspected by Griebach and erased by Lachmann.. Rückart, Tischendorf." Likewise Westcott and Hort, also Nestle. If *κλόμενον* is genuine, Calov's version on this passage is at any rate correct: *Indicatur gravitas passionis Christi, quia corpus tanta tormenta sensit, ac si confractum ac comminutum fuerit*. Calov says "*ac si*" because in the proper sense Christ's body was not broken, Joh. 19:33 ff.

and Mark 14:24: τούτό ἐστί το αἷμά μου το τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης. In contrast, the cup words in Luke and Paul go directly to the final purpose (*finis*) of the Lord's Supper as a means of grace, namely, the New Testament or forgiveness of sins, 1 Cor. 11:25: τούτο το ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι; Luke 22:20: τούτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν τῷ αἵματί μου. ¶ The answer to the question what is "the New Testament" (ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη) has been made unnecessarily difficult. The "New Covenant" or the "New Testament" is, according to the explicit explanation of Scripture, the forgiveness of sins. This definition of the New Covenant is given by Scripture itself. As the forgiveness of sins the New Covenant is defined in contrast to the Old Covenant already in the prophecy Jer. 31:31-34.¹³¹⁹⁾ This definition of the New Covenant is appropriated by the Apostle Paul Rom. 11:27 in the words: "For this is My covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins." The same is done in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. 8:8-12 and 10:16-17, where the Jeremiah passage is quoted in more detail: "This is the testament that I will make to the house of Israel after these days, says the Lord. ... For I will be merciful to their iniquity and their sins, and their unrighteousness will I remember no more." The Old Covenant as the Law Covenant is the imputation of sins, which is why Moses's ministry is called 2 Cor. 3:9 "the ministry that preaches condemnation," ἡ δα κονία τῆς κατακρίσεως. The New Covenant or New Testament as the covenant of the Gospel is the forgiveness of sins, wherefore the office of the New Testament is called 2 Cor. 3:9 "the office that preacheth righteousness," ἡ διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης. "Righteousness" here, by virtue of its contrast with "damnation," can only be *iustitia imputata*, that is, the forgiveness of

1319) One should not have doubted what Philippi on this passage remarks: "The Jeremiah passage is quite to be regarded as the Old Testament basic passage for the καινὴ διαθήκη to be concluded with Israel in the future." The "this" (αὐτῇ) in "this is my testament" refers forward, of course, to "when I shall take away their sins." Meyer: "This remission of sins granted by me will be my covenant to them." Quenstedt II, 1283: *Ipse Christus poculum eucharisticum nominat Novum Testamentum et Ieremias affirmat in Novo Testamento comprehendi hoc pactum: Propitius ero iniquitati eorum et peccati eorum non recordabor amplius, Ier. 31..* [[Google](#)]

sins, be.¹³²⁰⁾ In short, Luther is right when he remarks on the words of the cup in Luke and Paul: "This cup is the New Testament": "Dear, what is 'New Testament' but forgiveness of sins and eternal life, purchased for us by Christ and granted to us in the sacrament?"¹³²¹⁾ The following words, "in my blood" (Paul: εν τῷ ἔμφῳ αἵματι, βῆϊαδ: εν τῷ αἵματί μου) give the reason or cause why the communion cup is the New Testament or the forgiveness of sins. "In my blood" is: by means of my blood, because of my blood. Luther: "meines Blutes halben"; Chemnitz: propter sanguinem meum. Most of the moderns agree with this. Meyer also explains grammatically correctly: "Christ says that the cup is the New Covenant because of his blood, which is in the cup. The expression that the cup is the New Covenant, or the forgiveness of sins, has nothing unusual but abundant examples in Holy Scriptures. We have biblical examples in passages such as John 11:25 and John 6:64: Christ is the resurrection and the life, and: Christ's words are spirit and are life. The meaning is not that Christ only signifies or represents the resurrection and life, but that through Christ the resurrection is present. Likewise, Christ's words do not mean only spirit and life, but through Christ's words or in Christ's words there is spirit and life. So also the cup of the Lord's Supper does not signify the forgiveness of sins, but in and with the cup the forgiveness of sins is there or present by virtue or because of the blood of Christ, so that everyone who partakes of the cup can also take or appropriate the forgiveness of sins from it by faith."¹³²²⁾

1320) So correctly also Meyer on this passage
278 f..

1321) St. L. XX.

1322) The το ντερ νμόν εκχνόμενον in Luke, 22:20, though standing in the nominative case, is best related to the immediately preceding τῷ αἵματί μου. The abnormal case setting emphasizes more emphatically what is said of the blood of Christ, namely, that the blood is shed for us, than would have been done by connecting it in the dative case. Thus Meyer and Philippi. That oppositional determinations, when they occur more independently and are thus to be emphasized, are placed in the nominative apart from the grammatical construction, is found both in the New Testament (Jas. 3:8) and in classical Greek. Cf. Winer, Gr. 6, p. 471 ff. In general, compare Winer's entire section on irregular sentence formation and irregular relationship of individual words in a sentence, l. c., pp. 495-559. From Luke 22:20 Winer draws

6. The material of the Lord's Supper. ^


Because, on the basis of Scripture, the presence of the bread is to be held against the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation, and the presence of the body of Christ against the Reformed doctrine of symbolization, there is in the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ a twofold material, which the Lutheran Church, following the terminology of Irenaeus, calls the earthly (*terrena*) and the heavenly (*coelestis*) material. Thus, the Formula of Concord states, "They confess, according to the words of Irenaeus, that in this sacrament there are two

the relation of ἐκχυνόμενον to ποτήριον, although he considers the relation from ἐν τῷ αἵματι possible. Luther deals at length with the question here involved, [St. L. XX, 1060 ff](#), though he declares it unessential in relation to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. — With Luther it is also to be noted that the "in my blood" belongs to the whole statement: "This cup is the New Testament". It gives the reason why the cup is the New Testament. It cannot be merely bound with "this cup" because it is separated from it by the words: "is the New Testament". Luther: "These words, Luke 22:20: 'This is the cup, the New Testament in my blood', are not to be understood in such a way that this word 'in my blood' should belong to the word 'this is the cup', as this spirit pretends." ([XX, 278](#).) "In my blood" also cannot be merely bound with ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη, because it is separated from it in Paul by ἐστίν. Should it be grammatically bound with ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη, then after ἐστίν the article had to be repeated and the text read thus: τὸντο τό ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστίν ἡ ἐν τῷ ἐμοί αἵματι. Thus Luther, [XX, 1059](#). That Luther was justified in asserting the missing article against Oecolampadius is acknowledged by Meyer. Meyer states: "Ἰεοῖν decides against the binding of ἐν τῷ ἐμοί αἵματι with ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη, followed by most (Erasmus, Beza, Calvin, etc.), but rightly rejected by Luther (in the Great Confession). Christ says that the cup is the New Covenant by virtue of his blood, which is namely in the cup." On this occasion Philippi V, 449 gives Meyer a well-deserved rebuke. Philippi remarks: "But how great is the power of dogmatic prejudice is shown by the fact that Meyer, in spite of this correct grammatical interpretation, nevertheless immediately continues: 'For nothing but his blood, which was about to be shed, does the Lord see in the wine of the cup, before which vividly concrete but symbolic vision of the solemn moment the quarrel of the churches is the most cutting contrast.' Meyer thus decrees *ex scrinio pectoris sui* that a symbolic action is present, as if that were quite indisputable, and then in turn states the subject trope." Meyer makes use of the *petitio principii*, which is so familiar to the Reformed procedure of proof, as we encountered in the fact that on the part of the Reformed, images, parables and allegories are generally used to combat the Real Presence, whereby it is presupposed as already proven that the words of the Lord's Supper are to be grasped figuratively.

things, one heavenly and one earthly." (*Confitentur iuxta verba Irenaei eucharistiam constare duabus rebus, terrena et coelesti.*)¹³²³⁾

The earthly materials are bread and wine, not indeed in themselves, but because the Lord's Supper is an act (*actio*) insofar as they are distributed and received. The heavenly material is the body and blood of Christ, which, when the Lord's Supper is celebrated after institution, are supernaturally but essentially or substantially bound with the bread and wine and are received. All substitutes for the twofold materials are to be rejected.

The earthly material of the Lord's Supper. As water and the application of water belong to baptism, so bread and wine and the act of eating and drinking belong to the Lord's Supper as earthly materials. As in baptism we dare not substitute another liquid for water, so in the Lord's Supper other elements cannot be substituted for bread and wine.¹³²⁴⁾ If this happens, doubts must necessarily

1323) M. 649, 14. [*Trigl. 977, Sol. Decl., VII, 14* ] Baier III, 497: *Materia sacrae coenae duplex est, terrena et coelestis. Ita nostrates communiter, praeunte Irenaeo, qui lib. IV Adv. Haeres, c. 34 scribit: Qui est a terra panis, percipiens invocationem Dei, iam non communis panis est, sed eucharistia, ex duabus rebus constans, terrena et coelesti.* [Google] The Greek words read, IV, 18 (*Bened.*): Ἀπό γῆς ἄρτος προσλαμβανόμενος τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τὸν θεὸν οὐκέτι κοινὸς ἄρτος ἐστίν, ἀλλ' εὐχαριστία, ἐκ οὗτο ὑποθέτων συνεστηκνία, ἐπιγείου τε καὶ οὐρανίου. on these words of Irenaeus: Loofs, RE. ³ I. 47 ff; Kahnis, *Dogmatik 2 II, 361 ff*; Chemnitz, *Fundamenta*, c. X; Gerhard, *L. de s. coena*, § 103; Baier, *Comp. theol. historicae, Loc. XVIII*.

1324) Christ used bread (ἄρτος) at the institution of the Lord's Supper, Matt. 26:26, etc. That there was wine in the communion cup we see from the τό γέννημα τῆς ἀμπέλου, Matt. 26:29, etc. The proximate nature of bread and wine is not certain, thus adiaphoron. Walther writes (*Pastorale*, p. 168 f.) according to the procedures of the old Lutheran theologians: "An adiaphoron is whether the bread is leavened or unleavened, whether it is rye bread, wheat bread, grain bread, barley bread, or oat bread, and whether it has this or that shape, if it is only a pastry of grain flour and water. It is also an indifferent thing whether the wine is red or white, completely pure (*merum*) or mixed with water (which the Lord probably used according to the custom of the country), if it is only drink from the vine (γέννημα τῆς ἀμπέλου) according to Matt. 26:29. The pastor is to exercise the greatest caution lest something be used at Holy Communion which is sold as wine without being so. He is not to burden the church worker or any other person with it, but to consider that he himself is responsible above all for the use of true wine. It is a mistake, if the Greek and Roman church alone with the krama (οἶνος ὕδατι κεκραμμένος == wine mixed with water), or if the Reformed

arise as to whether we celebrate the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ. And as the application of water belongs to baptism, so also to the Lord's Supper that bread and wine are distributed and received. Where, as in the papist sacrifice of the Mass and in the feast of Corpus Christi, the elements are not distributed and received, there is no Lord's Supper and no Body of Christ, but only mischief and deception. It is a perfectly correct axiom: "Nothing has the nature of a sacrament outside the use ordered by Christ", *Nihil habet rationem sacramenti extra usum a Christo institutum*.¹³²⁵ Taking with the mouth or with the hand is an adiaphoron.¹³²⁶ Lutherans also consider the breaking of bread during the celebration of the Lord's Supper to be an adiaphoron,

Beza, according to Calvin, wants to celebrate Holy Communion with some similar element substituted for bread and wine, or if the [Gnostic Encratites](#) in the second to the fourth century even forbade wine and used only water in its place even at Holy Communion, in which they have also been followed in more recent times by certain abstinence enthusiasts in America." In order not to carry a moment of uncertainty into the sacrament, one should also abstain from the use of the so-called grape juice, since there are doubts as to whether the said liquid is still τὸ γέννημα τῆς ἀμπέλων after the [process of sterilization](#). RE.² I, 53: "[Surrogates](#) for wine occur variously among the heretical sects: among the Encratites water, among others milk, honey, unfermented grape juice. ... But the Church did not refrain from declaring all this unlawful and insisting on the use of actual wine." Since there is no doubt about the use of fermented grape juice, it is appropriate to the dignity of the sacrament to abstain from experimenting with all liquids of which it is not precisely known whether they are — resp. whether they are [still](#) — γέννημα τῆς ἀμπέλων. According to the latest legislation in the United States Congress, the use of fermented grape juice "*for sacramental purposes*" is not affected by the prohibition legislation. Thus, there is no reason to experiment with grape juice in this regard either.

1325) F. C. 649,15 [[Trigl. 977](#), [Sol. Decl.](#), VII, 15 [🔗](#)]: "Except for the taking (*extra usum*), when one takes the bread aside and keeps it in the sacrament vessel (*in pixide*) or carries it around in the procession and shows it, as is done in the papacy, they do not hold that Christ's body is present." Even if bread falls to the ground or wine is spilled during the celebration of Holy Communion, the Body of Christ does not fall to the ground and the Blood of Christ is not spilled, because *extra usum a Christo institutum* his *unio sacramentalis* takes place.

1326) Some Reformed think that taking with the hand is essential. Chamier at Quenstedt II, 1242. That also the taking with the mouth is a right taking is also evident from Joh. 19:30. About the necessary caution in the distribution of the cup, so that the [drinking](#) really takes place, see Walther, *Pastorale*, [p. 186](#).

in which some Reformed agree with them.¹³²⁷⁾

The heavenly material of the Lord's Supper. ^ With regard to the *materia coelestis* it is also necessary to remain with the words of the Lord's Supper and to reject all humanly devised substitutes. Unfortunately, this subject must be treated at length. The following substitutes have been mainly proposed:

1. "The whole Christ," "Christ's person," "Christ's personality," etc. The Reformed theologians assure us that they let Christ's true body and Christ's true blood be in the Lord's Supper, only both stand synecdochically for the whole Christ, for the whole humanity and the whole Godhead, for the whole person, etc.¹³²⁸⁾ The Romans also want the "whole Christ"

1327) Most Reformed hold that the breaking of bread is essential, some, like Beza and Zanchi, declare it to be incidental (*adiunctum accidentale*) with Luther and the Lutherans, like other incidental circumstances reported of the institution of the Lord's Supper (night time, Upper Room, etc.). Most of the Reformed declare the breaking of bread during the communion to be essential, because through it the manner of Christ's death must be symbolically represented, and therefore without the breaking of bread the symbolic character of the Lord's Supper would not be fully represented. It has been rightly objected that what is supposed to be represented did not take place at all, because the Scriptures expressly reject the breaking of the body of Christ in the proper sense, Jn 19:36. The Lutherans very correctly say that Christ broke the bread in order to be able to divide and distribute it. They point to the constant use of language in Scripture for this. As it is said in the words of the Lord's Supper, "He took bread, gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples," so it is said Matt. 14:19 of the feeding of the five thousand: "He commanded the people to lie down, and took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looked up to heaven, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples"; Mark 8:6: "He took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples"; v. 19: "When I had broken five loaves among the five thousand"; v. 20: "When I had broken the seven among the four thousand"; Matt. 15:36: "He took the seven loaves and the fish, gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples"; Luke 24:30: "It happened while He was sitting at the table with them, He took the bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to them"; Is. 59:7: "Break bread for the hungry" : Lam. 4:4: "The young children ask for bread, and there is no one to break it for them." Therefore Luther says: "We must not interpret 'break' nor need it according to our conceit, but according to the scriptural custom. Now 'to break' in Scripture, especially where it is said of bread or eating, means as much as to break or to distribute." (St. L. XX, 1066.) Cf. Chemnitz, *Fundamenta s. coenae*, c. 8; p. m. 44 sq.; Philippi V, 426 ff; Walther, *Past. [Pastorale]* .. p. 169 f.

1328) The quotations in Heppe, *Dogm. d. ref. K.*, p. 466 ff. Trelcatius, *Scholast. et metliodica 11. com. s. theol. institutio*, Hannover 1610, p. 240:

to be the *materia coelestis*, in order to be able to prove that at the Roman Lord's Supper, despite the removal of the cup, the laity the laity do not miss out.¹³²⁹⁾ Even newer theologians, including those who call themselves Lutheran, are in the habit of substituting the "whole Christ" for the body and blood of Christ, partly in the opinion that Christ's Supper is enriched in this way.¹³³⁰⁾ ¶ Against this it is to be noted: Of course, there is no question that the whole Christ is present, as in the universe, so also in particular in the church and in all church acts — thus also in the Lord's Supper. In the Lord's Supper, however, Christ gives something that is the object of eating and drinking with the mouth, and this is not the whole Christ, but Christ's body and blood, as the words of the Lord's Supper read: "Take, eat, this is my body," etc. So in the Lord's Supper we receive with the mouth no more and no less than Christ's body and blood, the body with the bread and the blood with the wine. Therefore, the "concomitance", by which Rome wants to instruct the world that with the body of Christ also the blood of Christ is received, because the body is not without blood, is to be described as a pure invention. With right the characterization: Luther rightly characterizes concomitance as a nonsensical inference in the familiar coarse words.¹³³¹⁾ By the way, it is not meant seriously at all when

"We do not exclude the whole Christ (*Christ ipsum totum*) from the Lord's Supper, since by the names 'body' and 'blood' synecdochically the whole humanity, indeed, his whole person, is understood." Calvin also uses "Christ's body" and "Christ" *promiscuously*, e.g., *Inst.* IV, 17, 30. Philippi rightly points out V, 295 the "arbitrary identification of Christ's body and the whole Christ" recurring in Calvin.

1329) *Trid.*, sess. 13, 6. 3: *Totus et integer Christus sub panis specie et sub quavis ipsius speciei parte existit.* [Google] Likewise can. 1. 3.

1330) Nitzsch-Stephan, *Dogmatik*, p. 667, says of the newer theologians: "The version of the *materia coelestis* is completely changed. For instead of the substances, namely, the body and blood of Christ, the living personality of Christ himself and his action have come to the fore; but a *unio sacramentalis* between it and the earthly elements is impossible in the old sense." Frank points out (III, 22 ff. 104 ff.) that even the later Melancthon, in the times of his vacillation, used the expressions "body of Christ" and "Christ," or person of Christ, *promiscuously*. He wants to be content with it, *Christ vere adesse et efficacem esse.* [Corp. Ref. III, 514.

1331) Luther (XIX, 1686 f.): "The very finest thing in the bishop's note is that the parish priests should teach the people how under the one form the whole Jesus Christ, Son of God, God and man, in addition to being his body and blood, is eaten and drunk by the laity. ... To this now establishes the concomitant, that is, the consequence. Because Christ's body is not without blood, so

the Reformed teachers speak of the presence of the "whole Christ" in the Lord's Supper. They do not allow the "whole Christ" to be in the Lord's Supper any more than Christ's body and blood. Calvin not only denies that Christ's promise, "I am with you," is to be drawn from Christ even after His humanity, but also declares the Lutheran doctrine which professes this to be more intolerable and indecent than the Roman transubstantiation.¹³³²⁾ It is merely playing with words when Reformed theologians, in order to make their doctrine of the Lord's Supper appear quite rich and full, claim that they substitute the "whole Christ" and his "whole humanity" for the "body" and "blood" of Christ.

2. The benefits (*beneficia*) of Christ, the power (*virtus*) of the body and blood of Christ, Christ's merit, the forgiveness of sins, etc. Thus Reformed and more recent theologians.¹³³³⁾ Against this

it follows that his blood is not without the soul; it follows that his soul is not without the Godhead; it follows that his Godhead is not without the Father and the Holy Spirit; it follows that in the sacrament, even under one form, the soul of Christ, the Holy Trinity, is eaten and drunk, together with his body and blood; it follows that in any mass a sacrificer offers and sells the Holy Trinity; It follows that because the Godhead is not without the creature, heaven and earth must also be in the sacrament; it follows that the devils and hell are also in the sacrament; it follows that whoever eats the sacrament, even in one form or another, eats the bishop of Meissen, with his mandate and his note; from this it follows that a priest of Meissen eats and drinks his bishop twice in every mass; from this it follows that the bishop of Meissen must have a greater body than heaven and earth; and who wants to tell all the consequences more and more? But finally it also follows that all such followers are asses, fools, blind, mad, nonsensical, furious, foolish and raving; this consequence is certain. What devil told us to invent such things from our heads? ... Who has commanded us to draw more into the sacrament than the clear words of Christ give? Who has made you sure whether these consequences are true? How do you know what God is able to do? How can you measure his wisdom and power, that he could not have a body and blood in the sacrament alone, that nevertheless his soul and divinity would not be in it, although his soul and divinity cannot be without body and blood? Who will refrain from finding and fathoming anything in such of his miracles apart from and above his words?"

1332) *Inst.* IV, 17, 30.

1333) Heppe, op. cit. Wolleb: *Materia interna [coenae Domini] est Christus cum tota satisfactione et merito suo*. Frank (III, 46 f.) rightly says of Calvin: "Calvin, who on the one hand maintains that the body of Christ is still given, indeed that the Holy Spirit nourishes us with the substance of his flesh and blood, denies on the other hand the communication of this very substance, in whose place he puts the *beneficia, quae*

is to say: The "benefits of Christ" etc. are, as Lutherans and Reformed admit, not received with the mouth. Since in the Lord's Supper it is a question of oral reception, as is evident from the words of institution: "Take, eat, this is my body," the benefits of Christ are not to be used for Christ's body and blood as materia coelestis. Then, again, it must be remembered that in the Lord's Supper Christ gives us what was given for us in death and poured out for the forgiveness of sins. The benefits of Christ, Christ's merit, the forgiveness of sins, are not given for us and shed for the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, to use the benefits of Christ, etc., as substitutes for Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper is a self-judging alloecosis. — By the way, again, it is not at all serious when Reformed theologians talk as if they allow "Christ's benefits," "Christ's merit," and "Christ's satisfaction" to be given in the Lord's Supper. Since, according to Calvinist doctrines, Christ's benefits and merit are not at all acquired for all men, they cannot, of course, be present in the Lord's Supper for all communicants. Here, too, there is only a playing with words.

3. The Holy Spirit and the action of the Holy Spirit. Thus, Calvin, at the same time dismissing the essential presence of the Body of Christ, says that the power (*virtus*) of the Holy Spirit is in the Lord's Supper. At this point Calvin becomes very eloquent. He says of the Holy Spirit that, overcoming all distances, He pours into the souls of believers.¹³³⁴⁾ In contrast, Calvin's successor, Beza, as we have already seen, judges that it is nonsensical to substitute the Holy Spirit and the action of the Holy Spirit in the

in suo corpore Christus nobis praestitit. In the *Consensus Tigurinus* it is said (Niemeyer, p. 215) of the Lord's Supper: Christ, "by remaining entirely after his body in heaven, descends to us with his power, *totus secundum corpus in coelo manens, ad nos sua virtute descendit*. [[Google](#)] Kirn also (*Dogmatik*, p. 130) rejects the actual version of the words of the Lord's Supper and has Christ "meet" his disciples in the act of the Lord's Supper in such a way that he "presents to them the healing powers of his body and blood given in death." Hodge also says (*Syst. Theol.*, III, 646): "To receive body and blood as offered in the Sacrament . . . is to receive and appropriate the sacrificial *virtue* or effects of the death of Christ."

1334) Calvin, *De vera participatione Christi carnis et sanguinis Christi in s. coena in Tractatus Theol.*, Geneva 1576, p. 1167 sq: *Tenendum est, nocn opus esse descendere carnis essentiam e coelo, ut ea pascamur, sed ad penetranda impedimenta et superandam locorum distantiam sufficere Spiritus virtutem*. [[Google](#)] So often, also *Inst.* IV, 17, 24.

Lord's Supper for the body and blood of Christ, because the Holy Spirit and the action of the Holy Spirit are not given in death and shed for the forgiveness of sins.¹³³⁵⁾ Incidentally, the Reformed are not serious about the gift of the Holy Spirit and the action of the Holy Spirit in the Lord's Supper either, since Zwingli and Calvin maintain that the Holy Spirit does not use such external things as the sacraments as "chariots" (*vehiculum, vasculum, plastrum*).¹³³⁶⁾

4. Spiritual fellowship with Christ and incorporation into the body of the church. This substitute for the *materia coelestis* enjoys special popularity both among the Reformed and the newer theologians.¹³³⁷⁾ To see the impossibility of this substitution, we need only recall how Beza takes to *ad absurdum* those of his co-religionists who want to substitute for the Body and Blood of Christ the benefits of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Indeed, if we wanted to substitute for *materia coelestis* "spiritual fellowship with Christ," the words of the Lord's Supper would have to read thus: Take, eat, take, drink; this is the spiritual fellowship with Christ given and shed for you for the remission of sins. And, Take, eat, take, drink; this is the insertion into the Christian Church, which is given and shed for you for the remission of sins. The spiritual fellowship with Christ as well as the incorporation into the body of the Christian church belong, of course, also to the Holy Communion. But they belong to the fruit and consequence of the faithful use of it, as is to be explained in more detail under the purpose (*finis cuius*) of the Lord's Supper.

5. The transfigured body of Christ, the "glorified human nature " of Christ, the exalted Christ, etc. Calvin allows the powers of the glorified body of Christ to pour into the faithful soul, and more recent theologians speak of a spiritual-bodily effect of the Lord's Supper, because in this sacrament the glorified body of Christ is received.

1335) *Epist. 5 ad Alemainum*, p. 57, ed. Genev., in Gerhard, *L. de s. coena*, § 76: "Well, let us substitute for these words 'body' and 'blood' that exposition and say: This is the effect of my death, which is given for you, and this is my spirit, which is shed for you. Is there anything more foolish (*ineptius*) than this talk?"

1336) Zwingli, *Fidei Ratio*; Niemeher, p. 24. Calvin, *Inst.* IV, 14, 17.

1337) Calvin in his commentary on 1 Cor. 10:16; Zwingli in his response to Bugenhagen's letter, St. L. XX, 517; Kirm, Dogmatik, pp. 129 f.

But the words of the Lord's Supper say nothing about a glorified body, and neither the essence of the Lord's Supper (the real presence) nor the salutary effect of it (the forgiveness of sins) is to be based on the glorification of the body of Christ. Not being transfigured did not hinder the presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the First Supper, and being transfigured does not promote its presence in the celebrations of the Lord's Supper that now take place in the Church until the Last Day. The Real Presence has its completely sufficient reason in the words of institution: "This is my body" and "This is my blood". Only in response to the Reformed objection that a human body cannot be present in several places at the same time do we point to the fact that Christ's body is not merely a true human body, but also the body of the Son of God, to whom Scripture expressly ascribes divine attributes communicated on account of the *unio personalis* — among these also omnipresence. ¶ Very correctly Walther says:¹³³⁸⁾ "The presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper is not to be based on the glorification of the body of Christ. The glorification gives only spiritual, not divine attributes to Christ's body. We believe that Christ's body is present and received in the Lord's Supper 1. because of the promise of Christ, 2. because Christ's body is the body of the Son of God." Walther attaches a warning to this: "Men like Sartorius and others, who have otherwise written many excellent things, use the glorification of the body of Christ as a support for the presence of the same in the Lord's Supper. But this is a false support, and false supports are as dangerous as an open contradiction. It is false to say that Christ can now give us his body in the Lord's Supper because he is glorified. In this false reasoning lies the fact that Christ could not give His body in an unenlightened state, which the first communion would annul." ¹³³⁹⁾ If

1338) Lectures 1874.

1339) Kromayer says to the reformed objection that also a transfigured body is not *omnipresent*: *Ex epistula ad Phil. 3:21, quod corpus nostrum humile conformaturum sit corpori suo glorificato, cum tamen corporibus glorificatis omnipraesentiam derogemus, obiciunt. Sed respondemus distinguendo inter corpus glorificatum et maiestaticum. Christus humile corpus nostrum conformabit corpori suo glorificato, non maiestatico. Corpus glorificatum et spirituale quid sit, ex corpore Christi post resurrectionem et quibusdam actibus particularibus ante resurrectionem ipsius discimus, v. g., quando factum fuit αφαντον, quando fores clausas*

the communicants now also receive the glorified body, because the glorified one is identical with the unglorified one, yet according to the words of the Lord's Supper it does not come into consideration as the glorified one, but as the one given there for our reconciliation (τὸ νπερ υμῶν δώδμενον), i.e. as the pledge and medium of the forgiveness of sins.

The sacramental union (*unio*)

penetravit, quando fulsit instar solis in monte Tabor; corpus maiestaticum Christus ex unione personali eum λόγω et sessione ad dextram Dei obtinet. Quod omnipraesens sit, ad maiestaticum ipsius corpus pertinet. [Google] (*Th. posit.-pol.* I, 913 sg.; in Baier [III](#), 501.) — [Burger](#) (RE.² I, 37): "Against this objection" (that a human body could not be in many places at once) "the calling to the state of transfiguration in which Christ stood was not sufficient. For the glorification does not abolish the nature of corporeality as such, and no one would claim even of the transfigured children of God that by virtue of their glorification they could be bodily everywhere or at many places at once. But the Lutheran confession does not say this either. The power of the freest disposition over his corporeality, as it is ascribed to Christ in the institution of Holy Communion and in its continued celebration, does not come to him by virtue of his glorification, but by virtue of the union of human nature with divine nature in his God-human person. From this union of the divine and human natures in the unity of his person follows not a mixture of both, but a mutual communication of their powers and attributes (*communicatio idiomatum*). They are not bound together in such a way that each of them manifests itself separately from the other, but where Christ is and has promised to be, there he is whole, unmixed, but also unseparated according to both natures. By virtue of this marvelous, unique reception of the human nature in Christ into the fellowship of the divine nature, which is beyond human comparison, the spatial limitation of corporality is not applicable to the body of Christ, and he also has more than one way of being present wherever he wants, not only the spatial one. According to this, he is always enclosed in a certain place and cannot be in another place at the same time, but as all things are always and everywhere present to him, so he is also present to all things where he has promised to be, and no spatial barrier prevents him from also bodily exercising his presence in holy communion, after he has promised to do so. This is the so-called ubiquity of the body of Christ, not a spatial extension of his body through the whole universe, an unthought which would, however, annul the humanity, but the ability, which comes to him by virtue of the union with the divine nature, to prove himself bodily present everywhere where he wants to do so, and he has promised to do this in the Holy Supper. The possibility of this presence, then, rests not on the glorification of Christ, but on the union and mutual communication and interpenetration of the divine and human natures in the unity of his Person."

sacramentalis). Since, according to the words of Scripture, there is a double matter in the Lord's Supper, namely bread and wine and the body and blood of Christ, it is at the same time taught that in the Lord's Supper there is a binding (*unio*) between the earthly and the heavenly element. This binding is appropriately called the *unio sacramentalis*. It consists in the fact that with the bread Christ's body and with the wine Christ's blood is received. ¶ All substitutes for the *unio sacramentalis* are to be rejected. Because the Romans allow only a sham bread in the Lord's Supper, they substitute transubstantiation for the *unio sacramentalis*. ¶ As far as the Reformed are concerned, they also use the expression *unio sacramentalis*. But because they teach that in this *unio* the body of Christ is separated from the bread of the Lord's Supper as far as heaven is separated from the earth, they describe their *unio sacramentalis* more closely as an image-forming union (*unio significativa, repraesentativa, symbolica*). This "representative" union has a very peculiar nature. It behaves with the same in such a way: Just as an image we have of the apostle Peter here on earth is bound up with Peter now in heaven, in that it represents the apostle to us in image and in this way makes him present to our spirit, so also the communion bread on earth is united with the body of Christ in heaven, in that the bread represents Christ's body to us and in this way makes the body of Christ present to our spirit. It should be noted, therefore, that when both Reformed and Lutherans use the term *unio sacramentalis*, they mean just the opposite. The Reformed understand by it the absence, the Lutherans the presence of the substantial body of Christ. The fact that many Reformed also call *unio sacramentalis vera, realis, substantialis*, etc., does not change this. Their opinion remains this: As a picture of Peter on earth pictures for us the real Peter in heaven, so also the bread in the Lord's Supper pictures for us the real, substantial body of Christ in heaven. The Reformed, in spite of their talk of a substantial body of Christ and a true, substantial union, do not get beyond the "imaging union," because they are quite willing to hold that Christ's body is as far separated from the Lord's Supper as heaven is from earth. ¶ The Lutheran church, on the other hand, holds to the scriptural concept of *unio sacramentalis*, according to which the bread and Christ's body are

are so bound in the Lord's Supper that they are received in one undivided act with the mouth (*manducatio oralis*), as the words read: "Take, eat, this is my body." ¶ Following the twofold material and the *unio sacramentalis*, the question has been discussed how the mode of receiving the body and blood is to be described in more detail. It is to be said: 1. because the twofold material is bound into a sacramental unity, that is, because Christ gives his body with the bread and his blood with the wine, not only bread and wine, but also the body and blood of Christ are received with the mouth (*manducatio oralis*). But because the binding of the *materia coelestis* with the *materia terrena* is not a natural or spatial but a supernatural binding (no *localis inclusio*, *impanatio*, *consubstantiatio*), the body and blood of Christ are also received with the mouth not in a natural but in a supernatural way. The Formula of Concord, on the basis of the *unio sacramentalis*, holds to the oral reception of the Body and Blood of Christ on the one hand, and to the supernatural mode of reception on the other. It says: "Since Christ over the table (*mensae assidens*) naturally hands to his disciples bread and natural wine, which he calls his true body and his true blood, saying, Eat and drink, such a command, by virtue of the circumstances, cannot be understood otherwise than from the oral eating and drinking, but not in a gross, carnal, capernaïtic way, but in a supernatural, incomprehensible way."¹³⁴⁰ Adolf Harnack, in characterizing Luther's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, quotes only these few words, "The body of Christ is bitten with the teeth."¹³⁴¹ We cannot but accuse Harnack here of falsifying history. Because Harnack quotes verbatim, he has looked up the words in Luther. To be sure, Luther says: "Whoever eats this bread eats Christ's body; whoever crushes this bread with teeth or tongue crushes Christ's body with teeth or tongue." But Luther immediately adds: "and yet it remains true throughout that no one sees, grasps, eats, or bites Christ's body as one visibly sees and bites other flesh".¹³⁴² If Harnack wanted to remain historically true, he would at least have to say: Luther teaches both, namely that Christ's body is eaten and bitten with the teeth

 1340) M. 661, 64 [*Trigl. 995, Sol. Decl., VII, 64* ] 1341) *Grundriß der Dogmengeschichte* 4, p. 434.

1342) *St. L. XX, 1032*.

and that Christ's body is not bitten with the teeth. If he had then pointed to the relevant passage in Luther's writings, other people would have read there and immediately recognized in what respect both are true according to Luther's doctrine. On the one hand, Luther states that there is a "sacramental unity" in the Lord's Supper through Christ's institution. He says: "Here a unity of two beings has been established; I will call this sacramental unity, because Christ's body and bread are given to us there as a sacrament." After this sacramental unity, the matter stands for Luther thus: "What is done with the bread is rightly and well appropriated to the body of Christ." On the other hand, Luther holds that "sacramental unity" is not a spatial or natural union. He says, "After all, we poor sinners are not so foolish as to believe that Christ's body is in the bread in the gross visible way as bread in the basket or wine in the cup, as the enthusiasts would like to impose on us, to pin on us with our folly."¹³⁴³) And in this respect Luther says: "and yet it remains true that no one sees, grasps, eats, or bites Christ's body". Frank is also confused on this point. He writes:¹³⁴⁴) "The apologists [of the Formula of Concord] could only claim that Luther says this for the sake of sacramental unification and insofar only *secundum quid*, not *simpliciter*, and explicitly states that it remains true that no one sees, grasps, eats, or bites Christ's body. But this defense does not cover the vulnerable parts. For if for the sake of sacramental union it may be said that Christ's body is bitten, why not for the same sake that Christ's body is digested?" Frank has forgotten here that the words of the Lord's Supper refer only to the act of eating and drinking, but do not extend to "digestion." The bread in the Lord's Supper, according to Christ's institution, is not meant as bodily food, but as communion bread, that is, as the medium of the communication of the body of Christ. Only in this function is the *unio sacramentalis* there and therefore happens to the body of Christ what happens to the bread. Just as the bread that falls to the ground during the distribution is not the body of Christ, so also the bread, in so far as it is

1343) St. L. XX, 811. 1344) Theol. of F. C., III, 141.

bodily nourished and digested as bodily food (*cibus corporalis*), is not the body of Christ. Quite correctly Melancthon, Brenz and others say in an expert opinion of 1557:¹³⁴⁵⁾ Insofar as the bread in the Lord's Supper is bodily nourishment, the essence of the sacrament has ceased. *Cum facta sumptione panis descendit in ventrem et alteratur, estque iam cibus corporalis, desiit ratio sacramenti.* [Google] If the Reformed theologians combat the presence of the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper and the *manducatio oratis* with the objection that then the body of Christ is also "digested," this objection is a gross lack of understanding and an unconscious or even conscious mockery of the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ. This explains the serious and sharp words of the Formula of Concord:¹³⁴⁶⁾ "We also command the righteous judgment of God against all impertinent, mocking, blasphemous questions, which decency forbids to mention, and talks, as in a coarse, carnal, capernaïtic and abominable manner of the supernatural, heavenly mysteries of this sacrament quite blasphemous and with great offence by the Sacramentarians are brought forward. As we hereby completely condemn the capernaïtic eating of the body of Christ, as if one were tearing his flesh with teeth and digesting it like other food, which the Sacramentarians, contrary to the testimony of their consciences about all our manifold testimonies, willfully force upon us and thus make our doctrine detestable to their hearers, and hold against it, believing, by virtue of the simple words of the testament of Christ, that it is true, yet supernatural eating of the body of Christ as well as drinking of his blood (*veram, sed supernaturalem manducationem corporis Christi, quemadmodum etiam vere, supernaturaliter tamen sanguinem Christi bibi docemus* [Google]), but our minds are caught up in the obedience of Christ, as in all the other articles of faith, and such mystery is not comprehended otherwise than by faith alone, and is revealed in the Word."

7. What makes the Lord's Supper the Lord's Supper. ^

(*Forma coenae sacrae*)

We have already seen that the Lord's Supper is not meant as a one-time or temporary event, but that Christ wants it celebrated in the Church until the Last Day. Thus, the question now arises as to how the Lord's Supper

1345) [Corp. ref. IX, 277.](#)
[Epit., VII, 41-42](#) 

1346) M. 543, 41. 42. [[Trigl. 817,](#)

is realized in each individual case. It is to be said: The Lord's Supper instituted by Christ is effected, not by the nature of the administrator, nor by the faith of the recipients, but by the institution of Christ, which is effectively effected wherever the Lord's Supper is celebrated according to the institution of Christ until the Last Day. To illustrate this, the Formula of Concord appropriates a saying of Chrysostom, in which it says, among other things, "As this address: 'Grow and multiply and fill the earth' is spoken only once, but is always powerful in nature, so that it grows and multiplies, so also this address is spoken once ('This is my body, this is my blood'), but to this day and to its future it is powerful and works that in the Lord's Supper of the Church his true body and blood are present."¹³⁴⁷ ¶ But even on this point the Reformed polemic was untrue from the very beginning. It sought to bring into the field against the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper the odium which rightly exists against the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation and the power of transubstantiation attached to the anointing of the priest. It likes to present the matter as if, according to Lutheran doctrines, human words and human authority also bring about the Real Presence.¹³⁴⁸ In contrast, Luther repeatedly states: It is not human speech that brings about the body and blood of Christ, but Christ's Word of promise and command alone. Christ's Word "This is my body" brought about the first supper, that is, made the communion bread the bearer of Christ's body. And because Christ commanded us to do what He did until the end of days, our Lord's Supper is also what the first Supper was. Christ's "word of command" ["*Heißelwort*"] now also makes our word an "effective word" ["*Tätelwort*"]. Luther writes against Zwingli: "If I were to say about all the loaves: 'This is Christ's body,' of course nothing would follow from it. But if we say in the Lord's Supper, according to its institution and its meaning: 'This is my body,' then it is His body, not because of our speaking or doing, but because of His hotness, that He has thus commanded us to speak and to do, and has bound his commanding and doing to our speaking."¹³⁴⁹ The Formula of Concord also takes this point in detail.¹³⁵⁰ "The true presence of the body and blood

1347) M. 664, 76 [[Trigl. 999, Sol. Decl., VII, 76](#) .

1348) So already Carlstadt in his "Gesprächbüchlein", [St. L. XX, 2356](#).

1349) [St. L. XX, 918](#). 1350) M. 663, 74 f. [[Trigl. 999, Sol.](#)

[Decl., VII, 76](#) .

Christ in the Lord's Supper does not (*non efficit*) create any man's word or work, be it the merit or speaking of the minister or the eating and drinking or faith of the communicants, but all these things are to be ascribed to themselves alone to the almighty power of God and to the word, institution and order of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the true and almighty words of Jesus Christ, which he spake in the first institution, were not alone powerful in the first Supper, but endure, are valid, work, and are yet (*adhuc hodie*) powerful, that in all places where the Supper is kept after Christ's institution, and his words are used, by virtue and power of the same words which Christ spake in the first supper, the body and blood of Jesus Christ are truly present, distributed, and received."

Therefore, for the celebration of the Lord's Supper each time, the congregation must clearly declare that it wants to celebrate the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ or, which is the same, to repeat the action ordered by Christ. The congregation declares this explanation by using the elements ordered by Christ, i.e. bread and wine, for use in the Lord's Supper. Consecration is correctly described as the act by which bread and wine are set apart from ordinary use and designated for use in the Lord's Supper, that is, designated so that with the bread, according to Christ's promise, the body of Christ is received, and with the wine, according to Christ's promise, the blood of Christ is received. That consecration was also in use in the apostolic congregations we see from 1 Cor. 10:16: "The cup of blessing which we bless (τό ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν), is it not the fellowship of the blood of Christ?" Here Calvin goes astray. In rightly dismissing the Roman consecration as a "magic enchantment" (*incantatio*) whereby the bread is changed into the body of Christ, he at the same time falls into the opposite ditch. He adds that the consecration in the Lord's Supper has to do only with persons, not with the elements of the Lord's Supper. With this he puts himself in obvious contradiction to the Scriptures. According to the apostle's words 1 Cor. 10:16, the object of εὐλογοῦμεν is the ὅ, and ὅ refers not to persons but to the cup of blessing, τό ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας,

ο εὐλογον μὲν.¹³⁵¹⁾ Against this Hodge says:¹³⁵²⁾ "When it is said that our Lord gave thanks or blessed *the cup and the bread*, it is to be understood that He not only thanked God for His mercies, but that He also invoked His blessing, or, in other words, prayed that the *bread and wine* might be what He intended them to be, the symbols of His body and blood, and the means of spiritual nourishment to His disciples. This is also taught by the Apostle in 1 Cor. 10:16, where he speaks of 'the cup of blessing,' i. e., the cup which has been blessed, or consecrated by prayer to a sacred use; as is explained by the following words, 'which we bless.'" Everything is correct here except that Hodge takes the liberty of slipping "the symbols of the body and blood of Christ" into the text. According to the text, the bread and wine are blessed, not that they might be "symbols," but that they might be the "fellowship" of the body and blood of Christ. Meyer also admits, despite his hostility to the Scriptural doctrine of the Lord's Supper, that 1 Cor. 10:16 is "a praising consecration of prayer" (not of persons, but) "of bread and wine for holy use".¹³⁵³⁾ In this respect it is different with the Lord's Supper than with Baptism. In the case of Baptism, there is no mention of the consecration of water, neither in its institution by Christ nor in its administration in the apostolic church. But the consecration of the elements in

1351) *Inst.* IV, 17, 39. How Calvin confuses right and wrong is evident from the following words: *Nihil ergo magis praeposterum fieri in coena potest, quam si vertatur in mutam actionem, quod sub papae tyrannide factum est. Totam siquidem vim consecrationis a sacerdotis intentione pendere voluerunt, quasi hoc nihil ad populum pertineret, cui mysterium maxime explicari oportuerat. Inde autem natus est hic error, quod non observabant promissiones illas, quibus conficitur consecratio, non ad elementa ipsa, sed ad eos, qui recipiunt, destinari. Atqui non panem alloquitur Christus, ut corpus suum fiat; sed discipulos iubet manducare atque illis corporis et sanguinis sui communicationem. pollicetur. Nec alium ordinem docet Paulus, quam ut una cum pane et calice promissiones fidelibus offerantur. Ita est sane. Non hic magicam aliquam incantationem imaginari nos decet, ut satis sit verba demurmurasse, quasi ab elementis exaudiantur; sed verba illa vivam praedicationem esse intelligamus, quae auditores aedificet, quae intus penetret in eorum animos, quae cordibus imprimatur ac insideat, quae efficaciam in complemento eius, quod promittit, exserat. ... Si referuntur promissiones et mysterium enarratur, ut cum fructu recipiant, qui recepturi sunt, non est, quod dubitemus, hanc esse veram consecrationem.* [Google]

1352) *Syst. Theol.*, III, 618.

1353) To Matt. 26:26.

the Lord's Supper is reported to us by Scripture both in the institution of the Lord's Supper and in the administration of it in the apostolic Church.¹³⁵⁴⁾

It has been discussed with which words the consecration should be done. With regard to this point, Luther, on the one hand, opposes the papists, who declared it a great sin if one or the other word was accidentally omitted during the recitation of the words of institution. Luther, on the other hand, points to the fact "that the Holy Spirit has diligently ordered that no evangelist be in complete agreement with the other."¹³⁵⁵⁾ On the other hand, Luther insists that "the order of Christ,


1354) Well Gerhard (*L. de coena s.*, § 151) describes the consecration to the Roman and Calvinist error in the following words (translated in Walther's *Pastorale*, p. 171 f.): *Haec eucharistiae consecratio 1) non est magica quaedam incantatio vi verborum certorum essentialiter transmutans panem in corpus et vinum in sanguinem Christi, sicut sacrificuli pontificii fingunt, quod propter rasuram et unctionem vi canonis et intentionis in fide ecclesiae ex opere operato conficiant sacramentum, et externa symbola in corpus et sanguinem Christi essentialiter convertant. 2) Nec est historica tantum institutionis repetitio, sicut Calviniani recitationem verborum institutionis parvi faciunt (Bucerus in cap. XXVI. Matt.) eandemque ad populum saltem dirigendam, nequaquam vero ad externorum symbolorum sanctificationem spectare adserunt (Calvinus, lib. IV. Instit., cap. 17, § 39), sed est 3) efficax αἱσθητός, quo iuxta mandatum, ordinationem et institutionem Christi ex prima coena sanctificatio in nostram coenam quasi derivatur, et externa elementa ad usum hunc sacrum destinantur, ut cum his corpus et sanguis Christi distribuuntur [Google]. Non quidem tribuimus recitationi verborum institutionis hanc vim, ut corpus et sanguinem Christi occulta aliqua virtute verbis inhaerente praesentia faciat (sicut magi sua carmina de Iove Elicio, aut de luna coelo deducenda certis verbis recitant), multo minus, ut externa elementa essentialiter transmutet; sed sincere credimus ac profiteamur, quod praesentia corporis et sanguinis Christi a sola voluntate et promissione Christi et a perpetuo durante primae institutionis efficacia in solidum dependeat; interim tamen addimus, primae aevi illius institutionis repetitionem, a ministro ecclesiae in celebratione eucharistiae factam, non solum historicam ac doctrinalem, sed etiam consecratoriam esse, qua iuxta ordinationem Christi externa symbola vere et efficaciter ad usum sacrum destinantur, ut in ipsa distributione sint corporis et sanguinis Christi κοινωνία, sicut apostolus diserte loquitur, 1 Cor. 10:16: Panis, quem frangimus, est communicatio corporis Christi; poculum benedictionis, cui benedicimus, est communicatio sanguinis Christi. Ipse Dei Filius verba institutionis semel prolata per os ministri repetit, et per ea panem et vinum sanctificat, consecrat et benedicit, ut sint corporis et sanguinis distribuendi media. [Google]*

1355) Walch XIX, 1348 [St. L. XIX, 1104].

instituted in the Lord's Supper, be sung or spoken publicly and distinctly" so that in this way those celebrating the Lord's Supper may confess and become certain that they are celebrating the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ.¹³⁵⁶⁾ Likewise, the Formula of Concord, also citing 1 Cor. 10:16, says that "the words of institution in the act of Holy Communion are to be spoken or sung publicly before the assembly clearly and distinctly, and by no means refrained from, in order that obedience may be rendered to Christ's command 'This do' ... and the elements of bread and wine in this holy custom, that Christ's body and blood may therewith be given us to eat and drink, may be sanctified or blessed, as Paul saith: 'The blessed cup which we bless'; which is not done otherwise than by the repetition and recital of the words of institution."¹³⁵⁷⁾

In connection with the consecration, questions have been raised that come close to the field of *curiosae quaestiones*.

1356) Walther rightly calls it (*Past*, p. 173 f.) "an exceedingly lovely picture", as Luther XIX, 1279 sketches it of a truly Evangelical communion: "There steps before the altar our pastor ...who publicly and clearly sings the order of Christ, instituted in the Lord's Supper, ... and we, especially those who want to take the sacrament, kneel beside, behind, and around him ..., all of us right holy fellow priests, sanctified by Christ's blood and anointed and consecrated by the Holy Spirit in baptism. ... We do not let our parish priest speak the order of Christ for himself as for his person, but he is the mouth of us all, and we all speak it with him from the heart.... If he stumbles in the words or goes astray and forgets whether he has spoken the words, we are there, listening, holding fast and are certain that they have been spoken: therefore we cannot be deceived."

1357) 665, 79 ff. [*Trigl 1001, Sol. Decl. VII, 79 ff.* ] After Luther had said with regard to baptism: "If you wanted to baptize a child with water and say an Our Father or something else from Scripture and the Word of God over it, that would not be called a true baptism," he continues: "Just as in the sacrament of the altar of the body and blood of Christ, where the command and institution are not kept, it is not a sacrament. As if one were to read over the bread and wine on the altar the ten commandments, the Creed, or any other passage and psalms, or again, if one were to take instead of bread and wine something other, gold, silver, flesh, oil, water, even if he had the right words of Christ's institution, this would certainly not be Christ's body and blood, and although God's Word is there and God's creature, yet it is not a sacrament. For his order and command is not there, wherein he hath called bread and wine, and the words: 'Take, eat, this is my body; drink, this is my blood'. Summa, thou shalt neither choose nor ordain him word or creature thyself, and shalt neither do nor leave anything everywhere of thine own accord, but his command and order shall set thee both word and creature, which thou shalt keep entire and unchanged." (X, 2068.)


If, for example, it is asked whether it would not also be the Lord's Supper if Christians gathered to celebrate it, thinking in their hearts that they wanted to celebrate the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ, the answer is obvious that sensible people would not even think of "consecrating" the elements in this mute way. Even the Reformed protested against omitting the words of the Lord's Supper from the celebration.¹³⁵⁸⁾ And if Meyer tried to put his "praising prayer consecration of bread and wine to Holy Communion" into concrete reality, experience taught him that the "praising prayer consecration" indeed cannot come about without coming to the words with which Christ instituted and gave Holy Communion to His Church.

If it stands firm that not the nature of the administrator or the communicants, but the institution and order of Christ makes the Lord's Supper, then it is at the same time stated that not only the worthy, but also the unworthy guests receive Christ's body and blood, if they participate in a Lord's Supper at which the order of Christ is kept. Moreover, the manducatio indignorum is still expressly taught when the apostle says of the unworthy that they become guilty of the Lord's body and blood.¹³⁵⁹⁾ Luther therefore does not exaggerate when he counts "all in one cake" who "do not want to believe that the Lord's bread in the Lord's Supper is his right natural body, which the ungodly or Judas receives just as well as St. Peter and all the saints".¹³⁶⁰⁾ All who deny the *manducatio indignorum* deny *eo ipso* that Christ's body and blood are in the Lord's Supper by Christ's institution. The Reformed therefore teach that even for the worthy Christ's body and blood are not in the Lord's Supper but in heaven. Thus, however, the *manducatio indignorum* becomes a test question, and Luther rightly insisted that the Wittenberg *Concordia* of 1536 clarify this point.¹³⁶¹⁾

1358) *Admon. Neost.*, p. 101; in [Frank III, 131](#).

1359) 1 Cor. 11:27. 1360) Formula of Concord 653, 33. [F. C.,

[Trigl. 983, Sol. Decl., VII, 33](#) 

1361) Formula of Concord 649, 16 [[Trigl. 977, Sol. Decl., VII, 16](#) ]: Secondly, they hold that the institution of this sacrament, done through Christ, is powerful in Christendom, and that it does not depend on the worthiness or unworthiness of the minister who administers the sacrament or of the one who receives it. Therefore, as St. Paul says, that even the

From the fact that only the institution of Christ makes the Lord's Supper, it further follows that the Roman and Reformed do not have the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ, insofar as they perform an act which is outside the institution of Christ. Regarding the Roman Mass, the Formula of Concord declares:¹³⁶²⁾ "If the bread is not distributed in the Papist Mass, but is presented offered up or enclosed, transferred, and adored, it is not to be considered a sacrament." Concerning the Roman Private Mass in particular, Luther says:¹³⁶³⁾ "In the Private Mass there is not only the abuse or sin that the priest acts and receives unworthily, but even though the priest is holy and worthy, tamen ipsa substantia institutionis Christi sublata est, they take away the essential order and institution of Christ and make their own order.... Therefore no one can nor should believe that there is Christ's body and blood, because His order is not there." — In the judgment on the Reformed Lord's Supper, the Lutheran theologians do not entirely agree. Fecht, Dannhauer and others judge,¹³⁶⁴⁾ that the Reformed have the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ, thus also distributing and receiving Christ's body and blood. They base their judgment on the fact that the Reformed fellowships hold to the words of the Lord's Supper, even though they give the words a different meaning. Most of the old Lutheran teachers hold that the Reformed Lord's Supper is an act outside the order of Christ and therefore not a Lord's Supper. We will have to agree with this judgment. Since the Reformed publicly declare that they do not intend to celebrate the Lord's Supper with the Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ, but declare such a Supper to be an abomination, they also do not celebrate the Lord's Supper given by Christ to His Church. The Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper is an actual renunciation of Christ's words of the Lord's Supper. Thus they have no Word of God for their Lord's Supper; because Christ did not institute a Lord's Supper in which

the unworthy partake of the sacrament, so they hold that even the unworthy may truly receive the body and blood of Christ, and that the unworthy may truly receive the same, if they keep the Lord's institution and command. But such receive it to judgment, as St. Paul says; for they abuse the holy sacrament, because they receive it without true repentance and faith."

1362) M. 665, 87. [[Trigl. 1003, ibid., 87](#) ] 1363) [St. L. XIX, 1265](#).

1364) Cf. [Lehre und Wehre 1875, p. 119](#) ff.

bread and wine are distributed and received as a symbol of the absent body and blood of Christ. It is necessary to recall the analogue of Unitarian baptism. As little as Unitarians administer Christian baptism because they publicly renounce the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as the one true God, even though they still retain the words, so little do the Reformed administer Christian communion because they publicly renounce the meaning of Christ's communion words, even though they use the words according to outward sound. Luther writes — and these words have also been included in the Formula of Concord¹³⁶⁵ — "I confess the sacrament of the altar, that there truly the body and blood in bread and wine are eaten and drunk orally, although the priests who administer it or those who receive it do not believe or otherwise misuse it. For it does not stand on man's faith or unbelief, but on God's Word of God and order. Unless they first interpret God's Word and order differently,¹³⁶⁶ as the present enemies of the sacraments do, who, to be sure, have the same bread and wine; for they have not the words and established order of God, but have perverted and changed them according to their own conceit." The objection that we would then also have to deny Reformed baptism,¹³⁶⁷ is not applicable, because the Reformed do indeed renounce the meaning of the words of the Lord's Supper, but not the meaning of the words of baptism. The Reformed error on baptism goes only to the fruit, not to the essence of baptism.¹³⁶⁸

1365) 653, 32 [[Trigl. 983, Sol. Decl., VII, 32](#) 

1366) Frank ([III, 66](#)) correctly remarks on the "to interpret differently" that it does not "denote another case in an independent way", but is added exegetically to "to change God's Word of God and order".

1367) Thus Fecht and Dannhauer. The evidence [L. u. W. 1875, p. 180](#). Cf. also Frank [III, 145 f.](#)

1368) Walther, *Pastorale*, [p. 181](#): "It is true that the administration of Holy Communion is not rendered invalid and ineffective either by unworthiness or by unbelief or by the wrong intention of the person administering it; But those false teachers who, with the consent of their congregations, publicly pervert the words of institution, and impute to them a meaning according to which the body and blood of the Lord are not really present, distributed, and taken in the holy supper, who thus retain the sound of the words, but take out of them that which makes them the Word of God, namely, the divine meaning, and thus, as, for example, as, e. g., the Zwinglians and Calvinists, deny and abolish the essence of the Holy Supper (as the Antitrinitarians

It should be added that the Formula of Concord quite definitely rejects the opinion that the Lord's Supper is already realized by the consecration. Johann Saliger, pastor in Lübeck and Rostock, had stubbornly defended the view that already *ante usum*, i.e. before the distribution and reception, the *unio sacramentalis* takes place.¹³⁶⁹⁾ On the other hand, the Formula of Concord says:¹³⁷⁰⁾ "This blessing or recital of the words of Christ's institution, as ordered by Christ, is held (as if the blessed bread were not distributed, received, and enjoyed, but enclosed, offered, or transferred), does not alone make a sacrament, but it must be the command of Christ: That do, which sums up the whole action or performance of this sacrament, that in a Christian meeting one takes bread and wine, blesses, distributes, receives, eats, drinks, and thereby proclaims the Lord's death, must be kept undivided and unchanging, as also St. Paul sets before us the whole action of breaking bread or distributing and receiving 1 Cor. 10." Against Bellarmin's assertion that Christ spoke the words, "This is my body," even before the act of eating, and therefore that even before the reception the sacrament was complete (*confectum*) by the consecration, Quenstedt aptly says: "Christ does not speak absolutely of the consecrated bread, that it is his body, but of the bread broken and given for eating. For first he said: 'Take and eat,' after which he said: 'This is my body.'" ¹³⁷¹⁾

deny the essence of Baptism) — such do not administer the Lord's Supper, but distribute merely bread and wine, even though they retain and recite the words of institution."

1369) About Saliger see Walther, *Pastorale*, p. 175, note. Not only did a commission negotiate unsuccessfully with Saliger, but he also brought the matter to the pulpit. A more detailed account of the dealings with Saliger is given in Frank III, 146 ff.

1370) M. 665, 82 [Trigl. 1001, 83 f. 

1371) II, 1268. Walther quotes (*Pastorale*, p. 175) from Aegidius Hunnius, *Art. s. Loc. de sacramentis*, 1390, p. 712 sq.: "As the bread is the fellowship of the Body of Christ only in the act of eating and not earlier, so also the bread is not sacramentally united with the Body until that fellowship and that taking take place. For if, after the recitation of the words of institution by the minister, and after the success of the so-called consecration, a conflagration or other tumult should arise before anyone had come to the table of the Lord, and thus by this accident the sacred

8. The purpose of holy communion. ^

(*Finis cuius coenae sacrae*)

That the purpose of the Lord's Supper is the forgiveness of sins has already had to be explained repeatedly and in detail in another chapter, especially in the section: "All means of grace have the same purpose and the same effect"¹³⁷²⁾ and in the section: "The relationship of the Lord's Supper to the other means of grace."¹³⁷³⁾ We also saw already that this purpose of the Lord's Supper is not obtained by deduction from other scriptural passages or by theological construction, but is expressed perfectly clearly in the words of the Lord's Supper itself. When Christ adds to the words: "This is my body": "which is given for you" and likewise adds to the words: "This is my blood": "which is poured out for you for the remission of sins," he intended to evoke in his disciples at the first Supper, and in all subsequent repetitions of the Supper until the Last Day, the idea in all communicants that through Christ's atoning death they have a gracious God, that is, the forgiveness of sins. Any other understanding of the words of the Lord's Supper is absolutely excluded. Likewise, we saw that in the much disputed passage of Scripture, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood," the *finis cuius* of the Lord's Supper is directly expressed, because "the New Testament," according to the explanation of Scripture, is nothing other than the forgiveness of sins. Thus we hold: the Lord's Supper gives forgiveness of sins, and no other forgiveness of sins than the word of the gospel and baptism. The Lord's Supper, however, has a wonderful secondary circumstance which is not found in the other means of grace. In the Lord's Supper Christ confirms and seals the promise of the forgiveness of sins by the presentation of his body, which was given in death for us, and by the presentation of his blood, which was shed for us for the forgiveness of sins. In the Lord's Supper the forgiveness of sins is attested and sealed

act were prevented, the question arises whether, by virtue of the recitation that had taken place, the body of Christ was united to the bread in a secret way, even apart from the use of the bread, which consists in eating and was unexpectedly prevented. Here, surely, every sensible person would rather answer in the negative than in the affirmative."


1372) p. 127 ff.



1373) p. 343 f.

through the presentation of the ransom by which it is acquired. Therefore Luther breaks out into the following praise of the Lord's Supper:¹³⁷⁴⁾ "I love it with all my heart, the dear, blessed Supper of my Lord Jesus Christ, in which he gives me his body and blood, also bodily, into my bodily mouth, to eat and drink with such exceedingly sweet, kind words: Given for you, poured out for you."

As is well known, from the beginning the accusation was raised against Luther that he so emphasized the essential presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper that he forgot about the "spiritual enjoyment" of the atoning death of Christ, that is, the forgiveness of sins. This was one of the many ways in which Carlstadt, Zwingli, Oecolampadius and comrades were able to deceive Christians about Luther's doctrine and thus to disrupt the church of the Reformation. Adolf Harnack and others have repeated the untrue accusation¹³⁷⁵⁾ Luther, however, held to the Real Presence with great determination because it is taught in Scripture, and departing from the Word of Scripture in one place makes the whole Word of Christ waver in principle and in consequence. Nevertheless, Luther maintains that the Real Presence is merely a means to an end, namely, a means of presenting and assuring the forgiveness of sins, through the appended words of Christ: "given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." After Luther has proved from Scripture in the Large Catechism "the first matters concerning the nature of this sacrament," namely, the Real Presence, he says of the purpose "for which the sacrament is finally instituted," namely, the presentation of the forgiveness of sins: "which is also the most necessary thing in it, that one may know what we are to seek and get there."¹³⁷⁶⁾ Luther by no means puts the real presence "in the place of *sola fides*,"¹³⁷⁷⁾ but he lets the real presence remain the support intended by Christ for *sola fide*. The Lord's Supper is for him "food for the soul"; "it is given for daily pasture and feeding, so that faith may recover and be strengthened."¹³⁷⁸⁾ But the "faith" of which Luther speaks here is for him nothing other than faith in the forgiveness of sins. The Lord's Supper falls under Luther's

1374) [St. L. XIX, 1292](#). 1375) [Dogmengesch., Grundriß 4, p. 433](#).

1376) M. 502, 20 ff. [[Trigl. 757, 20](#) , 1377) Against Harnack, op. cit.

1378) Large Catech. M. 502, 23 ff. [[Trigl. 757, *ibid.*, 23](#) , 23 



concept of the "*distributio meriti Christi*",¹³⁷⁹⁾ Luther repeatedly inculcates that even the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper do not help, but only harm, unless there is faith in the heart in the words: "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." And because the Reformed did not cease to postpone the *status controversiae*, and spoke of a *carnalis esus* of the sacrament on the part of the Lutherans,¹³⁸⁰⁾ even after the proceedings of Zwingli and Oecolampadius continued, to ascribe to the Lutherans an appetite for "human flesh,"¹³⁸¹⁾ so also the Formula of Concord repeats Luther's doctrine that "without spiritual nourishment even sacramental or oral eating in the Lord's Supper is not only unwholesome, but also harmful and condemnable."¹³⁸²⁾ The Formula of Concord has Christ say about the purpose of the Lord's Supper: "By establishing, sealing and confirming this my testament and new covenant, namely the forgiveness of sins, with you men".¹³⁸³⁾

If we want to formulate the *finis cuius* of the Lord's Supper as sharply as possible, we must say something like: The real presence is certainly a necessary condition for the wholesome use of the Lord's Supper. All who do not believe in the Real Presence should not use the Lord's Supper, because they do not distinguish the Body of the Lord.¹³⁸⁴⁾ But it is not faith, insofar as it believes the essential presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, that makes the use of the Lord's Supper wholesome, but faith, insofar as it believes the words "given and shed for you," that is, the forgiveness

1379) Luther (XX, 925): "The blind, foolish mind does not know that *meritum Christi* and *distributio meriti* are two things, and mixes them together. Christ once earned forgiveness of sins on the cross and purchased it for us; but he distributes it where he is, every hour and in every place, as Luke writes, ch. 24:46 f.: "Thus it is written, that Christ must suffer, and rise again the third day" (there stands his merit), "and preach repentance and remission of sins in his name" (there stands his merit distribution). Therefore we say that in the Lord's Supper there is forgiveness of sins, not because of the food, or that Christ there earns or acquires forgiveness of sins, but because of the word, by which he distributes such acquired forgiveness among us, saying: 'This is my body, which is given for you'. Here you hear that we eat the body given for us, and hear and believe this in the meal; therefore forgiveness of sins is distributed there, which was nevertheless obtained at the cross."

1380) Thus Calvin, *Inst.* IV, 17, 25.

1381) Bezas κρεωφαγία, p. 383, note 1256.

1382) M. 660, 61. [[Trigl. 995, Sol. Decl., VII, 61](#) , 1383) M. 658, 53. [[Trigl. 991, ibid., 53](#) , 1384) 1 Cor. 11:29.

of sins through the Lord's Supper. It is the same here as, for example, in Christology. The belief that Christ is true God and man is a necessary condition for the saving faith in Christ.¹³⁸⁵⁾ But it is not faith, insofar as it believes the true deity and the true humanity of Christ, that makes saved. The devils also have this faith.¹³⁸⁶⁾ Only faith that believes in the forgiveness of sins, which Christ, true God and man, has acquired for him and promised in the Word of God and in the sacraments, makes him saved. All who deny the forgiveness of sins as the first and foremost end of the Lord's Supper make Christ's Supper practically worthless, no matter what they believe or do not believe about the nature of the Supper.

We still have to deal with this antithesis now. The forgiveness of sins as *finis cuius* of the Lord's Supper is denied by the Romanists. The *Tridentinum* pronounces the anathema on all who say that the main purpose of the Lord's Supper is the forgiveness of sins (*remissio peccatorum*).¹³⁸⁷⁾ Carlstadt sought to instruct Christians, "This is a mean and abominable pity that our Christians seek forgiveness of sins in the sacrament."¹³⁸⁸⁾ Likewise, Zwingli admonishes that while one should celebrate the Lord's Supper as a "commemoration" (*commemoratio*) of Christ's death, one should beware of the idea that forgiveness of sins is offered in the Lord's Supper.¹³⁸⁹⁾ The same teaching is given by Calvin. The *Consensus Tigurinus* warns against the idea "as if the visible sign, while it is offered, at the same moment brings also the grace of God."¹³⁹⁰⁾

These admonitions not to regard the Lord's Supper as a presentation of the forgiveness of sins acquired from Christ are, of course, in accord with Zwingli's and Calvin's doctrines. Because both teach,

1385) Matt. 16:13 ff. 1386) Matt. 8:29.

1387) The quote is printed on p. 396, note 1282.

1388) On Anti-Christian Abuse, etc. St. L., XX, 94.

1389) Opp. III, 258: *Coena dominica, ut eam Paulus appellat, mortis Christi commemoratio est, non peccatorum remissio*. Ebenfo in *Fidei Ratio*, Niemeyer, p. 29 sq.: *Si remissionem peccatorum [efficiat], ut una pars perhibet, ergo discipuli adepti sunt remissionem peccatorum in coena, frustra igitur Christus est mortuus*. [[Google](#)]

1390) Niemeyer, *Pastor* 195: *Aesi visibile signum, dum in medium profertur, eodem secum momento Dei gratiam adveheret*.

that God's grace in Christ is not available at all to all men, but only to the elect,¹³⁹¹⁾ so also the Lord's Supper cannot be the presentation of a grace that all communicants could take hold of by faith. But according to Zwingli's and Calvin's doctrines, there is no forgiveness of sins in the Lord's Supper for the elect either, since according to both doctrines the saving revelation of grace and the effect of grace on the elect takes place directly, in the secret action of the Holy Spirit, not through the means of grace.¹³⁹²⁾ The character of the means of grace, as of the word of the gospel and of baptism, so also of the Lord's Supper, always presupposes that Christ has acquired grace for all men, and that the efficacy of the Holy Spirit does not take place without the means of grace and alongside them, but through the means of grace. Therefore we have the following situation: Even if the Zwinglian-Calvinist Reformed were to teach according to Scripture about the nature of the Lord's Supper, namely the Real Presence of the body of Christ given in death and the Real Presence of the blood poured out for the forgiveness of sins, this would not have the slightest practical value as long as they deny the *gratia universalis* and the efficacy of the Holy Spirit working through the means of grace. But do not Zwingli and Calvin, in spite of their denial of universal grace, in hundreds of passages call the Lord's Supper a sign, emblem, pledge (*signum, tessera, pignus*) of the grace and benefits of Christ acquired through Christ's death on the cross? Admittedly, they speak in this way.¹³⁹³⁾ But they have no right to such talk as long as they hold to *gratis particularis*. If Christ's body is not given for all, then the sign of Christ's body in the Lord's Supper does not point

1391) Calvin, *Inst.* III, 24, 12. 15. Hodge, *Syst. Theol.*, II, 323.

1392) Zwingli's *Fidei Ratio*; in Niemeyer, p. 24-26. Calvin, *Inst.* IV, 14, 17. *Consensus Tig.* ch. XVII. Hodge, II, 684: "Efficacious grace acts immediately."

1393) Calvin, *Inst.* IV, 14, 17; 17, 1. 11. In the commentary to 1 Cor. 11:24: *Coena speculum est, quod Christ crucifixum nobis repraesentata*. In the *Consensus Tigurinus* [Google] it says (Niemeyer, p. 193): *Hic unus inter alios praecipuus (finis Sacramentorum), ut per ea nobis gratiam suam testetur Deus, repraesentet atque obsignet...* [Google] In the *Epositio to Cons. Tigur.* Calvin even believes he may say: *Facessat igitur putida illa calumnia, theatricam fore pompam, nisi re ipsa praestet Dominus, quod signo ostendit. Neque enim dicimus quidquam ostendi, quod non vere detur.* [Google] (Niemeyer, p. 213.)

all the participants in the Lord's Supper, and therefore none of them, to the grace purchased by Christ's death on the cross. If the faith of the individual is to adhere to "the sign", then the sign must necessarily apply to all. If the sign does not apply to all, then the sign is for the individual a support not for faith but for doubt. Zwingli and Calvin, to be sure, point to "the spiritual enjoyment" of the body and blood of Christ as on the strong side of the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The Lutherans, by the doctrine of *manducatio oralis*, are said to eclipse, even make impossible, the spiritual enjoyment which is accomplished by faith. But it is obvious that Zwingli, Calvin and all those who follow them, for their part, make all spiritual enjoyment completely impossible as long as they deny that Christ's body is given to all men without exception. The same complete destruction of the "spiritual enjoyment" that takes place through faith also follows from the Reformed doctrine of a secret, direct action of the Spirit. First, faith, through which spiritual enjoyment is imparted, does not have as its object secret workings of the Holy Spirit in the human heart. The object of faith, insofar as it makes one a child of God, is the gracious disposition in God which Christ brought about by his atoning death and which he presents or offers to men in Word of God and sacrament. He who wants to make secret effects in the heart of man the object of faith teaches the Roman *gratia infusa*, not the Christian saving grace, which is always only *gratuitus Dei favor propter Christ*. On the other hand, such secret, direct effects of the Holy Spirit do not exist at all. What is spent for it is man-made. And the faith based on it is also man-made sentiment, which is wrongly put on the account of the Holy Spirit. This is as certainly true as all the revelation and effect of the Holy Spirit promised to us men is accomplished through the means of grace. Furthermore, the Zwinglian Calvinist Reformed have no right to speak of a "memorial supper" of Christ's death in binding with the Lord's Supper. A memorial meal of Christ's atoning death is had in the Lord's Supper only by those who hold the Scriptural doctrine that Christ died for all mankind. All those who hold to the doctrine of *gratia particularis* have in the Lord's Supper not a memorial meal, but a meal of doubt. Suppose an earthly host were to invite a hundred guests to a meal, but in the process


declare that only twenty elect,¹³⁹⁴⁾ known to him alone, should come to the actual enjoyment of the meal, the hearts of the whole invited company would be filled with doubt. The same mood must take hold in all participants in the Reformed "memorial meal" as long as they hold to the error that Christ's death does not apply to all, but only to the elect. Finally, the Reformed have no right to the expression in which they finally all agree, namely, that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper are "symbols" of the body and blood of Christ. The symbol extends no further than the thing symbolized. Now, if the body of Christ is not given for all, the bread and wine cannot be symbols of the body and blood of Christ to all participants in the Lord's Supper. Thus Zwingli's and Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper collapses in itself, both when we look at what they give up for the essence of the Lord's Supper, namely that bread and wine are symbols of the body and blood of Christ, and when we consider what they still want to hold up with regard to the fruit and effect of the Lord's Supper, namely that bread and wine are signs, symbols, etc. of God's grace, a memorial meal of Christ's death, and thus convey the spiritual enjoyment of Christ's atoning death through faith.

That the Romanists remove the forgiveness of sins from the Lord's Supper with an anathema, we have already proved with a quotation from the *Tridentinum*. The energetic removal of the forgiveness of sins from the Lord's Supper is completely understandable from the Roman point of view, because the Pope's empire is based on the uncertainty of the forgiveness of sins. But the extra effort with the anathema is unnecessary insofar as the uncertainty of grace follows by itself from the Roman doctrine that the absolution pronounced by the priest is based on repentance, the complete recounting of all mortal sins with all secondary circumstances, on satisfaction by works, and moreover on the intention of the priest to absolve.¹³⁹⁵⁾ These and other conditions exclude any certainty of *gratia sacramentalis*.

Equally effectively, all Arminian Reformed and all synergistic Lutherans remove the

1394) This relationship is seen in Calvin, *Inst.* III, 24, 12.

1395) Trident, *Sess.* XIV, c. 3-6, 8, can. 4-10.

finis cuius, that is, the forgiveness of sins, from the Lord's Supper. If the attainment of grace depends on a cooperation, a lesser guilt, a right conduct of man, a human self-determination, etc., an insurmountable gulf is thereby fixed between man and the grace offered in the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper shares the characteristic of the other means of grace. It is only a means of grace and useful to a man who is in the knowledge of his worthiness of damnation, if the offering of the forgiveness of sins is not conditioned by any human achievement, worthiness, lesser guilt, etc. It is therefore valid with respect to the grace offered in the Lord's Supper. Therefore, with regard to the purpose of the Lord's Supper, it is necessary to stand firm against the Roman, Calvinistic and Arminian Reformed, also against all synergists: As certainly as Christ adds to the words, "This is my body," "which is given for you," so certainly is the presentation, assurance, and sealing of the free and full forgiveness of sins the proper and proximate purpose of the Holy Supper. Luther: "Which also is the most necessary thing in it, that it may be known what we are to seek and get there." [[Trigl. 757, Sacrament of Altar, 20](#) ]

All other effects of the Lord's Supper are not coordinated with the presentation of the forgiveness of sins, but subordinated to it. As effects of the Lord's Supper are rightly mentioned: the strengthening of faith, the union with Christ, the union with the spiritual body of Christ, the Church, the promotion of sanctification, the kindling of love for God and neighbor, the increase of patience and the hope of eternal life. But all these effects are based not only partly but entirely on the fact that the Lord's Supper is the means of forgiveness of sins. Christian faith is by its very nature faith in the forgiveness of sins available through Christ's substitutionary satisfaction. Therefore, Christian faith can also be strengthened only in such a way that its object, through which it comes into being and exists, namely, the promise of the forgiveness of sins, confronts it through the means of grace ordered by God. Nor is there any other fellowship with Christ than that which is mediated by faith in the forgiveness of sins which he has obtained. All those who want to substitute a *gratia infusa* for this with Rome and with Zwingli and Calvin fall under the judgment: "You have lost Christ, you who would be justified by the law,

and have fallen from grace." ¹³⁹⁶⁾ There is also no other fellowship with the spiritual body of Christ, the Church, than that which is both initially effected and perpetually maintained by faith in the gospel of the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake. All who seek other means of connection with the Church thereby lose, as fellowship with Christ, so also fellowship with His spiritual body, the Church. There is also no other means of bringing about Christian sanctification than faith in the mercy of God, according to which God forgives our sins for Christ's sake. As the apostle writes, "I exhort you by the mercy of God to offer your bodies for sacrifice," etc. ¹³⁹⁷⁾ Nor is there any other means of kindling and strengthening love for God and neighbor in a human heart than faith in the love with which God has loved us, that He forgives sins to us unworthy ones for Christ's *satisfactio vicaria* alone. "Let us love him, for he first loved us!" ¹³⁹⁸⁾ and, "If God has thus loved us, let us also love one another." ¹³⁹⁹⁾ Likewise, Paul places the joyful hope of eternal life and patience under the cross merely in succession to justification, that is, the forgiveness of sins, by faith (δικαιωθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως κτλ.). ¹⁴⁰⁰⁾ Now because in the Lord's Supper the divine forgiveness of sins, sealed by the body and blood of Christ, is thus offered in a particularly emphatic and consoling manner, it happens that the spiritual effects mentioned are peculiarly proper to the Lord's Supper. All those who, with Rome, Zwingli, Calvin, and more recent theologians, do not let the Lord's Supper be a means of forgiveness of sins *primo loco*, actually make all the effects of the Lord's Supper impossible. If they remain consistent, they make the Lord's Supper a human work that separates them from the grace of God in Christ.

9. Who is to be admitted to Holy Communion. ^

(*Finis cui coenae sacrae.*)

Christian congregations, or their public ministers, are not lords of the sacrament, but only administrators of it. Therefore, in the administration of the sacrament, which is not their foundation but Christ's, they must judge according to Christ's instruction.

1396) Gal. 5:4.

1397) Rom. 12:1, 1398) 1 Joh. 4:19.

1399) 1 John 4:11.

1400) Rom 5:1 ff.

On the one hand, they are not allowed so-called "open communion"; on the other hand, they must be careful not to deny the sacrament to those Christians for whom it is intended by Christ. Gerhard and Calov rightly treat the *finis cui* or *obiectum* of the Lord's Supper also in dogmatics.¹⁴⁰¹⁾

First of all, as far as "open communion" is concerned, it is known to be advocated and practiced not only in Reformed fellowships but also in fellowships calling themselves Lutheran.¹⁴⁰²⁾ But a Christian congregation must bear in mind that Holy Communion is not intended for all men, but only for Christians. This is the difference between the sermon of the Gospel and the Lord's Supper. The sermon of the Gospel is to go over all men, believers and unbelievers. The Lord's Supper, however, is intended only for that part of men who have already come to believe in Christ. We can see this already in the normative example of Christ. Christ preached the Gospel to all the Jewish people and went from place to place for this purpose,¹⁴⁰³⁾ . However, he celebrated the First Supper in a closed circle, only with his disciples.¹⁴⁰⁴⁾ The apostolic church also did not practice "open" but "closed communion".¹⁴⁰⁵⁾ Luther says:¹⁴⁰⁶⁾ "Thus Christ did: He let the sermon go out into the multitude, as afterwards also the apostles, so that all heard it, believers and unbelievers; whoever caught it, caught it. So must we also do. But the sacrament should not be thrown into the heap among the people. When I preach the gospel, I do not know whom it will strike; but here I am to take it for granted that it has struck him who comes to the sacrament; there I must not cast it into doubt, but be sure,¹⁴⁰⁷⁾ that he to whom I give the sacrament has grasped the gospel and believes righteously."¹⁴⁰⁸⁾

1401) Cf. Gerhard, *L. de coena* s., § 221 sqq.; Calov, *Syst.* IX, 195 sqq.

1402) Cf. on American Lutheran circles A. L. Gräbner in [L. u. W. 1888, pp. 257 ff. 302 ff.](#): "On the history of the four points." RE. ³ I, 68.

1403) Matt. 9:35 ff. 1404) Luke 22:11, 14; Matt. 26:18, 20.

1405) 1 Cor. 11:20; 10:17.

1406) [St. L. XI, 616.](#)

1407) Namely, as far as a man can know this about another from his words and works.

1408) [Walther](#), Pastorale, [p. 144](#): "It is quite different with the Lord's Supper than with the sermon of the divine word. The word is not only given to keep a believer in the faith, but also to awaken a man from his sleep of sin, to bring him to the knowledge

of his sins and to bring him to faith; indeed, without the Word all this is impossible. Therefore, no one can and must be turned away from the sermon of the Word of God, for that would be to close the only door of grace to him. It is not so with Holy Communion: by it a man is not first to be brought to repentance and faith, but to be strengthened therein; by it a man is not first to obtain grace and become a Christian, but the grace obtained by the Word is thereby to be sealed to him, and he is to be preserved, and encouraged in Christianity; by this food a man is not first to be awakened to life from God, but, if he is already spiritually alive, to be nourished and refreshed. Therefore, whoever wants to enjoy Holy Communion worthily and for his salvation must have come to repentance and faith beforehand, must have attained grace beforehand, and must have become a true Christian. Enjoying Holy Communion is not a good thing in and of itself; rather, it depends on how one enjoys it. It does not work *ex opera operato*. It is not like a medicine that may be taken only to take effect; rather, it is a treasury whose treasures can be taken, grasped, and held by the hand of faith alone. He who has no faith, it is true, also enjoys the real and whole sacrament; for he enjoys not merely bread and wine, but in, with, and under these elements the body and blood of Jesus Christ, as a precious pledge of grace and forgiveness, really and truly with his mouth; but of the blessing for the salvation of his soul which lies therein he goes empty; for what can a pledge, however precious and valuable, help a man, and how can it serve him for the assurance of a thing, if he does not believe that it is such a precious and valuable pledge? But whoever partakes of Holy Communion without right faith and therefore unworthily, not only does not partake of the grace therein, but instead of grace he finds therein wrath, instead of life death 'instead of blessing curse; he becomes, as St. Paul writes, 'guilty of the Lord's body and blood; he eats and drinks judgment to himself, because he does not distinguish the Lord's body'. Terrible, then, is the sin which he commits who partakes of Holy Communion unworthily; and those who say, 'We must be glad that people still come to Holy Communion,' thus reveal how sadly stands their knowledge of this holy sacrament." It has been objected: Surely, in the administration of the Lord's Supper, in hearing the powerful and perfectly clear words of the Lord's Supper ("This is my body which is given for you," "This is my blood which is shed for you"), there could be evoked in a hitherto unbeliever both faith in the nature of the Lord's Supper (real presence) and faith in the purpose of the Lord's Supper (the forgiveness of sins). This possibility is to be admitted, as it is reported from the ancient Church of a pagan actor that he came to believe when holy baptism was performed on him on the theater stage in mockery of Christianity. But this possibility does not concern us. The church practice is determined by divine order. And the divine order reads: "Let man examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and

But also not all Christians are to be admitted to the Lord's Supper,¹⁴⁰⁹⁾ but

1. Only those Christians who have already been baptized. About this order in the administration of the New Testament sacraments the necessary has already been said under the section "The divine order of the Lord's Supper",¹⁴¹⁰⁾

2. Only those Christians who are able to examine themselves. Spiritual self-examination is expressly mentioned by Scripture as necessary for the wholesome use of Holy Communion: "But let a man examine himself (δοκιμάζτω δε ἑαυτὸν), and so (ὁντως) let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup."¹⁴¹¹⁾ This excludes from the use of the Lord's Supper children, the sleeping, the unconscious, those in their last moments without consciousness, the insane, etc;¹⁴¹²⁾

3. Only those Christians who believe the words of the Lord's Supper, that is, who believe both that they receive the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper and that Christ gives them this wonderful gift for the forgiveness of their sins. This

 drinketh judgment on him himself, that he may not distinguish the body of the Lord," 1 Cor. 11:28-29. It is divine order that at the Lord's Supper, as Luther says, "we should know whom it befalls."

1409) Gerhard, *L. de coena s.*, § 222.

1410) p. 342.

1411) 1 Cor. 11:28.

1412) Walther, *Pastorale*, p. 190: "Since, according to the Word of God, everyone who wants to go to the table of the Lord should first examine himself and distinguish the body of the Lord, Holy Communion is not to be served to children who are not yet capable of it. It was an obvious abuse, if this, as Cyprian's and Augustine's examples prove, with the approval of Innocentius I, out of misunderstanding of Joh. 6:53, what was understood by the sacramental part, happened quite generally in the third to the fifth century, which abuse also went on among the Bohemian Hussites and is still law in the Greek church today. Luther writes: I cannot agree with the Bohemians who give Holy Communion to children, although I do not therefore call them heretics. Among those who cannot examine themselves and therefore cannot be admitted to Holy Communion are also those who are asleep, unconscious, in the last stages of unconsciousness, insane, and the like. In support of this, Walther, as we have seen, points to the fact that Holy Communion does not, like a bodily remedy, have a physical effect, but presupposes consciousness and faith in the nature and purpose of the Lord's Supper. More details belong in the *Pastorale*, e.g., the question of whether insane persons, raving lunatics, and even physically possessed persons, if they have "lucid interims," are to be admitted to the Lord's Supper. Cf. Walther, op. cit. p. 192.

excludes Christians found in Reformed fellowships from the use of the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ. Certainly, there are true children of God in such Reformed fellowships where Christ's *satisfactio vicaria* is still preached. But because they do not believe the words of the Lord's Supper out of weakness in knowledge, they are not able to use the Holy Supper salutary. Explicitly the apostle Paul disqualifies, in regard to the use of the Lord's Supper, all those who do not believe the Real Presence, because with them the necessary discernment of the Lord's body (διακρίνειν το σῶμα τοῦ Κυρίου) cannot take place."¹⁴¹³) With the denial of the Real Presence, the finis cuius of the Lord's Supper also falls away for them, namely, that Christ's body and blood are received in the Lord's Supper for the forgiveness of sins. This, of course, also applies to those Lutherans who are in doubt about the Real Presence¹⁴¹⁴) or who, if they confess the Real Presence, do not seek forgiveness of their sins in the Lord's Supper, but ascribe to it a salutary effect *ex opere operato*;¹⁴¹⁵)

4. Only those Christians who do not have to dismiss a public offence beforehand. The details are dealt with in the *Pastorale*. In dogmatics, it should be pointed out that this practice — namely, the dismissal of a public offence before communion — is not based on human arbitrariness or legalism, but arises from the nature and purpose of the Lord's Supper. Because the Lord's Supper is not for Christians and non-Christians, but only for Christians, anyone who has called his Christianity into question for the congregation by a public vexatious act of sin

1413) 1 Cor. 11:29.

1414) When doubts about the Real Presence had been aroused in some by Carlstadt and the enthusiasts, Luther (XX, 201) gave the counsel: "If there is someone who is so weak that he might not have borne the blow, and doubts the sacrament, let him counsel and meanwhile remain without the sacrament and otherwise practice the Word of God, faith and love, let those handle it who are certain in conscience. You are not condemned if you remain without the sacrament." Likewise XX, 734.

1415) Luther (XX, 748 ff.): "It is not enough that we know what the sacrament is, namely that Christ's body and blood are truly there, but it is also necessary to know why it is there, and why or for what purpose it is given to us to receive. ... But this is what we call the right custom, not that it is only done and the obedience of the church is fulfilled. It is not to be done for the sake of the work, but that your heart may be strengthened, as the words are, "That is given for you, that is poured out for you.""

should, before communion, allow the congregation to judge that he has risen from his fall by God's grace. In Scripture, therefore, we also find the express prohibition of associating with such as have fallen into gross, grievous sins as brothers in the faith, that is, to associate as if nothing had occurred. "If any man be called a brethren, and be a fornicator, or a covetous man, or an idolater, or a drunkard, or a robber: with him also ye shall not eat."¹⁴¹⁶⁾ Whose grievous sin has become known to the congregation, his repentance must also, before he communes with the congregation, have become known to the congregation. It further follows from the nature and purpose of the Lord's Supper that persons who live in the sin of unforgiveness are to be suspended from the use of the Supper. The Lord's Supper is the means of forgiveness of sins, and only those who seek forgiveness of their sins in it use it properly. Forgiveness of sins from God can in any case only be sought by those who are willing from the heart both to forgive their neighbor's sins and to seek reconciliation with their neighbor.¹⁴¹⁷⁾ Furthermore, since all Christians are forbidden to hold to such teachers as depart from apostolic doctrine,¹⁴¹⁸⁾ it also goes without saying that those who have hitherto been members of a heterodox body must declare their assent to the right doctrine and leave the heterodox body before communing with der congregation. Communion is certainly faith fellowship or "church fellowship."¹⁴¹⁹⁾ Nor is it to be forgotten that the Lord's Supper is a private absolution. However, according to the divine order, we are to grant private absolution only to those

1416) 1 Cor. 5:11. The prohibition of the *συνεαθίσιν* applies to table fellowship in general ("neither having him at the table nor being at the table with him," Meyer), and especially the communion of the Lord's Supper.

1417) Cf. Walther, *Past.*, p. 194 f. Luther in the "Sermon on Confession and the Sacrament," XI, 585: "God will not be gracious and forgive a man's sin unless he also forgives his neighbor. Besides, a man's faith cannot be sincere unless it bears this fruit, that he, too, forgives his neighbor and asks his forgiveness; otherwise man may not appear before God. If this fruit is missing, his faith and his first confession [his confession "before God"] is also not sincere."

1418) Rom. 16:17: "Depart from the same!"

1419) Walther, *Past.*, p. 145.

whose penitent mind has become known to us, as far as men can judge. To the impenitent we are not to say, "Thou shalt live," but to call out to him in warning, "Thou must die!"¹⁴²⁰⁾ Therefore, Walther rightly judges that by practicing "open communion" a pastor "becomes an unfaithful, careless, and conscienceless pastor."¹⁴²¹⁾ Luther also points to this soul-dangerous mixture of law and gospel when he says, as we have already heard, "When I preach the gospel, I do not know whom it strikes; but here I am to take it for granted that it has struck whoever comes to the sacrament."¹⁴²²⁾ Luther expresses this even more crudely when he recalls what a faithful pastor has to say to the impenitent in individual application, namely this: "Repent and do right; if not, you can just as easily go to the devil without me and my absolution [individually] as you can go to the devil twice with my absolution and take me with you through your fault without my fault. No, man, it is said, you go, I remain here; I am not a priest, that I go with everyone to the devil, but that I bring everyone with me to God."¹⁴²³⁾ — In vain one invokes love for open communion. In fact, this practice is contrary both to the love of God and to the love of neighbor. Indeed, it both ignores God's order, which we find in Scripture concerning the use of the Lord's Supper, and it becomes the occasion for the neighbor to sin through unworthy use of the sacrament. This is true, of course, of the so-called "hospitable admission" of Reformed persons to the Lord's Supper.¹⁴²⁴⁾

Therefore, a Christian congregation acts conscientiously with regard to the administration of the Lord's Supper only if the registration for the Lord's Supper (usually called "registration for confession") is a fixed order in its congregation. It is obvious that only in this order is there the possibility of

1420) Hesek. 3:17-18. 1421) *Past.* p. 146 f.

1422) St. L. XI. 616. 1423) X. 882.

1424) This "admission by guest" contains a self-contradiction. If American-Lutheran synods wanted to keep the rule: "Lutheran altars only for Lutheran communicants", but wanted to allow exceptional cases besides, they thereby transferred the admission to the Lord's Supper again to the area of human arbitrariness, thus actually dropped the rule as a divine rule.

serving the Lord's Supper only to those persons who are to use it according to God's will. As for the exploration to be made at the time of registration for the Lord's Supper, it goes without saying that it is only appropriate for such persons whose faith and life are unknown to the pastor. Very correctly Walther says that the exploration before admission to the Lord's Supper is not based on a law, but merely on the need of souls. Exploration not only can but should be omitted in all cases where the pastor is dealing with righteous Christians known to him. In this case, to make an exploration would be an unnecessary burden both for the pastor and for those registering for the Lord's Supper. Likewise, Luther says: "Someone would like to be so understanding that he would only be asked once in his life, or not at all."¹⁴²⁵

On the other hand, the pastor and congregation must be careful that no one for whom Christ has ordained the Lord's Supper is refused or kept away. Even Luther in his time had to warn not only against laxity, but also against legalism and unnecessary strictness. He wrote to Balthasar Thüring in Coburg: "I have written to the pastor that he should not torture the ignorant by long trials if they want to go to the Lord's Supper, but not leave them completely untried and unheard. For that they should be left untried is of no avail. We reprove the adversaries that they serve the belly; but ours

1425) Walther, *Pastorale*, p. 152. It would be quite contrary to Luther's meaning and opinion if we wanted to transfer everything that Luther says with regard to the necessary "interrogation" before admission to Holy Communion to our church relationships without further ado. Because with us it has come to the formation of Christian congregations, to which belong only those "who earnestly desire to be Christians" — a condition which Luther strove for but could not attain — the pastor is as a rule personally acquainted with all the members of the congregation, that is, also with their state of Christianity, and an exploration of them before the Lord's Supper is therefore unnecessary. The following reminder is also in place here: If the pastor, as pastor, has to reproach a member of the congregation in a punitive manner, he should not postpone this until the next communion of the person concerned. If the pastor follows this postponement practice, it can come to the point that the registration for the Lord's Supper becomes a general day of judgment in the congregation, which is neither good for the pastor nor for the congregation. Walther therefore used to give the counsel to arrange a necessary rebuke, where possible, before the registration for the Lord's Supper, even if it is only for one day.

are hard and cleave to wrath. I ask you, therefore, for God's sake, to make every effort to ensure that the doctrines of the gospel are taught in an unbiased manner.¹⁴²⁶⁾ In order not to prevent or even discourage those who are weak in knowledge from taking communion, Walther gives instructions on what and how the pastor is to explore when such persons register for communion whose state of mind is unknown to him. The applicant should not be subjected to a "rigorous examination," but should be brought, if possible by way of conversation, to the point that he both speaks out about his personal state of Christianity and says himself what the Lord's Supper is and why he desires it. But even apart from the case of those who are unknown or not sufficiently known, the pastor must not lose sight of the fact that it is precisely with regard to the use of the Lord's Supper that the innate opinio legis is stirred up among the communicants — and probably also among the pastor himself. It is thought that because Christ's body and blood are received in the Lord's Supper, the wholesome use of the Lord's Supper also presupposes a special degree of one's own holiness and a strong faith. Therefore, especially among serious Christians who feel their great frailty, there is a tendency to postpone the use of the Lord's Supper until they feel more fervent in spirit, have become stronger in faith, and have made satisfactory progress in sanctification. But these are perverse thoughts based on forgetting the grace-means character of the Lord's Supper. It is true that in the Lord's Supper Christ's body and blood are received. But this wonderful gift stands in the service of the presentation and promise of God's free grace, which is based entirely on Christ's *satisfactio vicaria* and requires no worthiness of its own. That Christ accepts sinners, he wants to express, as in the other means of grace, so especially through the Lord's Supper. Luther says:¹⁴²⁷⁾ "The sacrament is only ever instituted so that we may be comforted and strengthened by it. Therefore you should not let yourself be driven by it in any way. If you feel your foolishness, good for you! For you must feel your infirmity." And before that:¹⁴²⁸⁾ "Thou must not make a tyrant of Christ, but, as he is true, let him be vain rich superfluous grace. If you feel in your

1426) Walch XXI, 1348. quoted by Walther, *Past.* p. 157.

1427) St. L. XI, 660. 1428) XI, 653 ff.

heart that you do not believe, and yet you would like to believe, you must not despair and flee from the sacrament, but seek help there so that your faith may be kindled and increase. For though some have been horribly punished for receiving the sacrament unworthily and without faith, yet these alone are they whom we have spoken of above, [namely] the hardened and reprobate hearts. But thus shalt thou do, thinking, Lord, behold, here is the word, here is my infirmity and sickness; so thou hast said thyself, Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.' Matt. 11:28. Do you think that he said these things to those who are already burning and strong in the faith? His kingdom is not to promote the righteous, but to help sinners, and also to make them righteous; therefore, he that is infirm and feels it, let him go and be helped." Luther also cites his own example: "It has also often happened to me that I have shied away from it and thus only stepped away more; until I saw that nothing helped, then I had to go. So you will also find that you see that it is the devil's ghost that draws people away, so that the more they shy away and want to wait until they feel faith in their hearts, the further they get away, so that at last, if they remain in the sense, all desire and craving in them go out, both for the Gospel and the Sacrament, so that they never get there. Therefore, you must put aside your mind and shyness and go and ask God to help you. If you do this often, you will feel that you will gain more and more desire for it, which you would not have gained otherwise. Therefore, I would like you to do the same and to have many who go to the sacrament in such an opinion, so that they may gain more and more desire for it and become stronger and stronger; otherwise, if you do not go, you will always remain cold and only become colder and colder." In order to prevent unjustified rejections of the Lord's Supper and at the same time to spare the pastor unnecessary discomfort of conscience, it is further to be remembered "that in regard to those whom he should and will admit to the Holy Supper, a pastor need not be certain that they are Christians standing in the living faith — for who could do this? — but only that their unchristianity must not be demonstrable or evident. To act according to one's moral convictions when admitted or rejected from the Lord's table is an

irresponsible dominion over consciences".¹⁴²⁹⁾ This judgment is not too harsh. Suppose the pastor were allowed "according to his moral conviction," that is, according to a "conviction" which he cannot prove to be correct before the congregation, to refuse someone from the Lord's Supper, both the congregation and those desiring the Lord's Supper would be exposed to the pastor's arbitrariness. This leads to the discussion of the pastor's right of suspension.

The pastor's right of suspension. As is well known, this is a question that has been discussed a lot in old and new times. Even the old Lutheran theologians do not have the same speech here.¹⁴³⁰⁾ We have to state: Because the pastor is responsible not only to the congregation but also personally and directly to God for whom he administers the Lord's Supper, the pastor has not only the right but also the duty of suspension in all cases in which admission to the Lord's Supper would be contrary to God's will and order. Walther specifies thus:¹⁴³¹⁾ "If a person registering had fallen into, or lived in, manifest mortal sin and was unrepentant about it; if he had committed theft and yet would not repay what he had stolen; if he had offended and angered someone, whether an individual or a whole congregation, or had been offended by someone and would not reconcile with the offended or offending party (Matt. 6:23-25; 18:28 ff.; Luke 17:3), etc.: then the pastor, though without power to put a member of the congregation under excommunication, is in the position of not being able to administer Holy Communion to him. Under such circumstances the necessity of the so-called suspension from Holy Communion arises, by virtue of which Holy Communion is refused to a member of the congregation ... until the matter is settled, or a postponement of its consumption is demanded, namely until the person desiring absolution and Communion shows marks of repentance, or is reconciled with his neighbor, as much as there is in him, and the like. As certainly as a pastor may not and cannot participate in the sins of others (1 Tim. 5:22), so certainly must he have the right of suspension from Holy Communion in all such cases in which, by admission to the Lord's Table, he would knowingly assist in the commission of a grave sin, thus making himself a participant in the sins of others. Therefore, as decidedly as our old orthodox theologians

1429) Walther, *Past.* p. [192](#).

1430) Walther, *Past.* p. [163](#) f.

1431) *Past.* p. [162](#).

deny to the pastors the right to recognize the excommunication without the congregation, they decisively concede to them the right to suspend from Holy Communion." It should be noted, however, that the pastor's suspension from the Lord's Supper is by no means an excommunication, as has often been erroneously asserted, but only a postponement of the use of the Lord's Supper until the person desiring the Lord's Supper shows marks of repentance or other obstacles to the use of the Lord's Supper according to the Word of God have been removed. Of course, the appeal from the judgment of the pastor to the judgment of the congregation must remain open to the suspended person, both because the Christian congregation is originally entrusted with the administration of the Lord's Supper and the pastor has suspended as a minister of the congregation (*minister ecclesiae*), and because the suspension temporarily affects the relationship of the suspended person to the congregation. But in the meantime, the person remains suspended. If a conflict should arise between the pastor and the congregation, and the conflict cannot be resolved even through detailed proceedings, the pastor would have to allow himself to be deposed rather than administer the Lord's Supper to a person who, according to God's order, should be denied it. Experience has taught that under our church relationships such cases of conflict are rare. In most cases the pastor succeeded in convincing the congregation of the legality of the suspension. Now and then the pastor was also convinced by the congregation and by persons brought in for consultation that the suspension should not have occurred. It is important that in our theological teaching institutions in the discipline of "pastoral theology" a number of typical cases in which suspension should not occur are dealt with in detail.¹⁴³²⁾

1432) In Walther's Pastorale, pp. 152 ff. 190 ff. Cases like these are treated: When there is an "evil rumor" about one desiring communion; when the same is directly accused of a grave sin, but his accuser can bring no witnesses or proof; when the pastor alone knows about the sin; when the one declaring is involved in a judicial process, etc. From the quotations abundantly supplied by Walther it is evident that even the older Lutheran theologians did not find quite reliable guides here, because they lived in state-church relationships and mixed state and church means of discipline here and there in the handling of church discipline. It is a correct axiom: De occultis non iudicat ecclesia. But this axiom also understands in itself that it is not the task of the church to bring hidden sins to light.

The binding of "confession" with the Lord's Supper is a good church order, but not a divine one. This applies both to private confession and to the so-called "confession service" with confessional speech, general confession of sins and general absolution. Walther quotes¹⁴³³⁾ from the "Instruction of the Visitators" of 1538:¹⁴³⁴⁾ "Whether the pastor himself or preacher, who deal with it daily, want to go to the sacrament without confession or interrogation, it shall not be forbidden to him herewith. The same is to be said of other prudent persons who know how to report themselves, lest a new papal compulsion or necessary custom arise from such confession, which we should and must have freely. And I myself go to Doctor Martin several times

In citing older theologians, Walther repeatedly refers to his note, *Past.* p. 154, where he says: "Confession before men, by the way, is only necessary if the neighbor is harmed by the non-confession, if, for example, an innocent man would have to suffer because of the non-confession of the guilty man. Unless this is the case, or unless the member is unburdening his heart to his pastor, the pastor should not ask whether or not he has committed a certain sin, lest the pastor thus press him to reveal a hidden sin or to tell a lie." Walther also wanted the questioning in confession to be limited to the confessor suggesting a confession of a certain sin when he notices that the confessor remains restless in conscience despite all instruction and encouragement. (*Past.*, p. 290.) Walther quotes approvingly from Hartmann's *Pastorale evangelicum*, p. 791: "It is an erroneous presupposition that a clear and explicit confession of all individual sins, especially those of which someone is accused by a rumor or a strong suspicion, is necessary, of which no commandment is found in Holy Scriptures. Nor is it any less false the premise that one who does not expressly confess his sins to the confessor is not truly sorry for them." The latter, as is well known, is the abominable doctrine of Rome (*Trid.*, sess. XIV, can. 4-8), by which it becomes the eavesdropper of mankind, makes the forgiveness of sins uncertain, secures its ignominious priestly rule, and exerts a demoralizing effect on mankind, especially from the female part of it. As certain as it is that the pastor should willingly meet the need of souls to open up inwardly in temptations, so seriously must he guard against the search for hidden sins. Walther writes (*Past.*, p. 159): "To inquire after secret sins is against the pastor's office," and quotes from the Saxon General Articles: "The ministers should not rashly ask of their confessors what is not confessed to them." If the pastor fails in this, he should put up with a rebuke, such as the words, "Pastor, that is not your business!" and not consider it a sign of impenitence.

1433) *Pastorale*, p. 168. 1434) St. L. X. 1655.

without confession, so that I do not make myself a necessary habit in my conscience; but again I need confession and do not want to do without it, mostly for the sake of absolution, that is, the Word of God."¹⁴³⁵⁾

10. The necessity of holy communion. ^

Holy Communion is not an indifferent thing, but divine order, which is to apply in the church until the Last Day. This has already been explained in detail.¹⁴³⁶⁾ It is part of God's will of grace that Christians, who are able to examine themselves and to distinguish the body of the Lord, use the Lord's Supper. Likewise, it has already been explained¹⁴³⁷⁾ that the Christian has a special consolation in the Lord's Supper against his need of sin, because in the Lord's Supper there is not only an individual promise of grace, but this individual promise of grace is also confirmed and sealed in a unique way, namely by the presentation of the body of Christ, which is given for us, and by the presentation of the blood of Christ, which is shed for us. Nevertheless, there is not to be taught an absolute necessity of the Lord's Supper for salvation, because the forgiveness of sins is not distributed among the various means of grace, but each of them presents the whole forgiveness of sins available through Christ's *satisfactio vicaria*, and works, or rather strengthens, faith.¹⁴³⁸⁾ It stands

1435) Cf. Luther's classic exposition on confession in the "Sermon on Confession and the Sacrament," XI, 585-590, on the three confessions, of which the first (confession of sin before God) and the second (confession of sin before the offended neighbor) are divine orders, but not the third. "The third is that commanded by the pope, which is done secretly in the ears of the priests. The same is not commanded by God." (585.) "But yet it is advised and good. ... For it is a wretched thing when the conscience is troubled and lies in anguish and knows neither counsel nor consolation. Therefore it is a noble and precious work that two come together and one gives counsel, help and comfort to the other, and it is done in a fine, brotherly and loving way: one discovers his illness, and the other heals his wounds. Therefore I would not do without this for the good of all the world. Although it should not be commanded, lest one make a conscience of it, as if one must first confess before going to the sacrament."

1436) p. 340 ff.

1437) Especially under the sections "The Relationship of the Lord's Supper to the Other Means of Grace," pp. 343 ff, and "The Purpose of the Lord's Supper," pp. 435 ff.


1438) Cf. the detailed explanation: "All means of grace have the same purpose and the same effect", p. 127 ff.

therefore, a man who has become faithful to the preached or read word of the gospel has forgiveness of sins and salvation, even if he did not use the sacraments due to circumstances. Luther rightly rejects the absolute necessity of baptism,¹⁴³⁹⁾ and also of the Lord's Supper. When Luther learned that Carlstadt's attack on the Christian doctrine of the Lord's Supper had caused some Christians to doubt the Real Presence, he gave them the counsel to suspend themselves from the Lord's Supper during the time of doubt, with the reasoning: "You are not condemned if you remain without the sacrament"; "otherwise practice in the Word of God, in faith and in love; let those handle it who are secure in their conscience".¹⁴⁴⁰⁾ Furthermore, as resolutely as Luther fought the Reformed doctrine of absence as a rejection of the Scriptural words of the Lord's Supper and, because of this rejection of the Lord's Supper words, denied the Reformed the Christian Lord's Supper altogether, he was far from denying salvation to those who, because of weakness in knowledge, did not believe the Real Presence. "We must nevertheless confess that the enthusiasts have the Scriptures and the Word of God in other articles, and whoever hears it from them and believes it will be saved, even though they" (the stiff-necked seducers) "are unholy heretics and blasphemers of Christ."¹⁴⁴¹⁾ This explanation of Luther is repeated in the preface to the Book of Concord. There, on the one hand, it is said that "the *condemnationes*, suspension and condemnation of false and impure doctrine" could not be avoided, "so that men would know to beware of the same"; on the other hand, it is not doubted "that many pious, innocent people are to be found even in the churches, which have not hitherto compared themselves with us, who walk in the simplicity of their hearts, do not understand the matter rightly, and have no pleasure at all in the blasphemies against Holy Communion".¹⁴⁴²⁾ If the absolute necessity of the Lord's Supper is referred to John 6:53: "If ye eat not the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," it must be remembered that this passage does not address the Lord's Supper at all.¹⁴⁴³⁾ In short, Luther and the Lutheran theologians rightly apply Augustine's dictum: *Contemptus sacramenti damnat, non privatio*, as to baptism, so also to the Lord's Supper.

1439) p. 329 f.

1440) [St. L. XX, 201. 734.](#)

1441) [St. L. XVII, 2212.](#)

1442) M. 16 ff. [[Trigl. 19](#) 

1443) pp. 385 ff.

At what time and how often Holy Communion is to be used is not certain in Scriptures. The diligent use, however, is not only indicated by the οσάκις in binding with the preceding imperative: "Do this in remembrance of me!",¹⁴⁴⁴⁾ but also results from the nature and purpose of the Lord's Supper and from the need of the Christians. The more or less diligent use of the Lord's Supper is rightly counted among the measures of the spiritual life of a Christian congregation. As far as the diligent use of the Lord's Supper is concerned, it would be hard to find a better explanation of it, covering the whole situation, than that given by Luther in the Large Catechism.¹⁴⁴⁵⁾

Christian Church. ^

(*De ecclesia*)


After Christ reconciled the whole human world to God by His vicarious satisfaction and rose from the dead, He sat down at the right hand of God to gather a church on earth until the Last Day through the Word of the reconciliation that had taken place, the λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς (the Gospel).


The Church as a whole. ^

(*De ecclesia universali*)

1. the concept of the Christian church. ^

To the question of what the Christian church is, the answer must be given on the basis of Scripture: The Christian church is all men — and only those men — who believe in Christ. But because in our time the expression "believing in Christ"

1444) Luther in the Large Catechism, M. 505, 45 [[Trigl. 763, V, 45](#) often as ye do it, he constraineth no man, but letteth it alone. Answer: It is true; but it does not stand there that one should never do it; yes, because he speaks the words: "But because he speaks the words 'as often as you do it,' it is still implied that you should do it often."

1445) M. 505-512, 40-87. [[Trigl. 761, 40-87](#) 

is often devalued in a way contrary to Scripture, it must be declared in more detail: The Christian church is all men — and only those men — who believe, through the action of the Holy Spirit, that they have forgiveness of sins for the sake of Christ's vicarious satisfaction (*satisfactio vicaria*). Neither the external association with a church fellowship nor the external use of the means of grace nor the external profession of the Christian faith nor the administration of offices in the church nor the effort for "morality" after the example of Christ nor an immediate rebirth or immersion in God, of which the enthusiasts of all genres speak, etc., but only personal faith in the forgiveness of sins, which is acquired through Christ's *satisfactio vicaria* and is proclaimed and promised in the Gospel, makes one a member of the Christian Church. Acts 5:14: "There were added," namely, to the Christian church at Jerusalem, "those who believed in the Lord," προσετίθεντο πιστευοντες τῷ Κυρίῳ). That alone by which a man comes to Christ and becomes justified before God, enters into God's fellowship of grace, and becomes a child of God—and that is faith in the redemption (ἀπολντρωσις) which came through Christ, Rom. 3:24—that alone also makes him a member of the Christian church. It is a scriptural axiom: *Sola fides in Christ membra ecclesiae constituit*. Even more briefly expressed: *Christiani sunt ecclesia*.


With the personal faith in the forgiveness of sins wrought by the Holy Spirit, the *unio mystica*, sanctification, "moral action," "the transformation of life into its Godly form," is immediately bound as an effect and consequence. Also, the members of the Church are described according to this nature and according to these works.¹⁴⁴⁶⁾ But faith remains the constitutive element. Luther says of *sola fide* in justification in its relationship to the coming into being and existence of the Christian church that it is this article alone "which produces, nourishes, builds, sustains, defends the church of God, without which the Church of God cannot stand one hour."¹⁴⁴⁷⁾

As is well known, there has been much discussion about the relationship between the manifestly wicked and the hypocrites (*mali et hypocritae*) who are found in the external fellowship of the Church,

1446) Ps. 15; 1 Cor. 6:15-20; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 1 Petr. 2:5.




1447) Opp. v. a. VII, 512. St. L. XIV, 168.

and the Christian Church. On the basis of Scripture it must be said that they do not belong to the Church, that is, they do not form a part of the Church (*non sunt pars ecclesiae*), but are only added to the church according to the external fellowship (*ecclesiae admixti sunt secundum societatem externam* [Google]). That only those men who, through the action of the Holy Spirit, carry faith in Christ in their hearts, are members of the Christian Church, is also expressed by all scriptural statements which express an inner, spiritual fellowship of the members of the Church with God, with Christ, with the Holy Spirit. Such expressions are: God's house (οἶκος θεου, 1 Tim. 3:13), God's temple (ναός θεου, 1 Cor. 3:6; 2 Cor. 6:16), temple of the Holy Spirit (ναός τον εν νμῖν ἅγιον πνεύματος, 1 Cor. 6:19), Christ's body and Christ's fullness (σώμα Χρίστον, πλήρωμα Χρίστον Eph. 1:23), children of God (τά τέκνα τον θεου, John 11:52). All unbelievers, be they Jews or Greeks, are not God's house, etc., but agencies of the devil, τον πνεύματος τον νυν ἐνεργοντος εν τόῃς τῆς ἀπερθείας Eph. 2:1-3. Also the definition of the church as the totality of the elect, which Luther approves and praises in Hus,¹⁴⁴⁸ is scriptural, 1 Pet. 2:9: νμεῖς γένος εκλεκτόν.

This is the doctrine of Luther and the Lutheran Church. In order to emphasize that no external fellowship with Christians and no external use of the means of grace, but only personal faith in the gospel brings one into the kingdom of heaven on earth, that is, into the Christian church, Luther says:¹⁴⁴⁹ "Otherwise a man would be in the kingdom of heaven just as if I threw a log or block among the Christians, or as the devil is among them." The Apology in the 7th and 8th articles (*De Ecclesia*) defines the concept of the Church. It says [*Trigl. 229, 10-11* ]: "These people are the right church, who now and then in the world from the rising of the sun to the setting truly believe in Christ"; in the Latin text: "who agree with regard to the gospel" (*qui de evangelio consentiunt*), thus believing that through Christ's merit, without works of their own, they have forgiveness

1448) On Ps. 118. St. L. V, 1234 f. So also Baier (III, 614): *Homines illi, quos Deus iuxta aeternum suum decretum fide et gratia sua donavit, collective sumpti dicuntur ecclesia* [Google]. Likewise Aug. Hunnius, Volum. th. disput., Witteb. 1598, p. 329; in Baier-Walther III, 614.


1449) St. L. XI, 490.

of sins. The Apology is no less clear about the relationship of the wicked and hypocrites to the Church. It says that the wicked and hypocrites do not belong to the Church; "for it is certain that all the ungodly are in the power of the devil and members of his kingdom, as Paul says to the Ephesians, that the devil reigns powerfully in the children of unbelief" [*Trigl.* 231, 16 distinction between Christ's kingdom and the devil's kingdom if one wanted the ungodly to be a part of the Christian church. The circumstance that "the ungodly in this life, while the kingdom of Christ is not yet revealed, are among the right Christians and in the church" (*admixti ecclesiae*, admixed to the church, and that *secundum societatem externorum signorum*, according to the fellowship of the outward signs), "hold offices [as teachers and other offices] in the Church," so "the ungodly therefore are not in the meantime a part of the kingdom of Christ." (p. 155, 18. [*Trigl.* 233, 18 world, not the Church." (155, 19. [*Trigl.* 233, 19 1450) Likewise, members of the Church are erring through weakness, whether they live in orthodox or heterodox fellowships, if they hold in their hearts trust in God's grace in Christ.¹⁴⁵¹⁾ Even those who believe before receiving baptism are to be counted as members of the Christian Church, because baptism is not of absolute necessity, as was explained in the doctrine of baptism.¹⁴⁵²⁾

 1450) Quenstedt (II, 1635): *Iniuste excommunicati non desinunt esse membra catholicae ecclesiae, etiamsi e visibili et particulari ecclesia eiiciantur.* [[Google](#)]

1451) Luther (VI, 1629): The sins of the godly "are in themselves damnable sin, but they do not condemn the godly because they recognize this impurity of their hearts and believe in Christ...."

1452) Gerhard, *L. de eccl.*, § 54: *Nos et catechumenos et omnes alios vera fide interna praeditos in ecclesia esse dicimus, si vel maxime baptismum actu nondum susceperunt.* [[Google](#)]

Since man is naturally inclined to the opinion that he is already secured for eternity by an external binding with the Christian church, it is obvious how great a practical importance it is to hold fast to the Christian concept of the church as the fellowship of believers or saints and to reject the concept of the church as an "institution" (*externa politia*). The question of belonging to the Christian church always coincides factually with the question of whether someone recognizes himself before God as a sinner worthy of condemnation and thereby believes that God is gracious to him for the sake of Christ's *satisfactio vicaria*.¹⁴⁵³) The Apology (154, 13 [*Trigl.* 231, 13 practical importance of the right concept of Church: "It is necessary to know what makes us members of Christ and what makes us living members of the church. For if we were to say that the church is merely an outward police force (*politia*) like other governance, in which there are evil and good, etc., no one would learn from this nor understand that Christ's kingdom is spiritual, as it is, in which Christ inwardly governs, strengthens, comforts the hearts, distributes the Holy Spirit and various spiritual gifts, but it would be thought to be an outward way, a certain order of certain ceremonies and services. Again, what difference would there be between the people of the law and the church, if the church alone were an outward police? Now Paul thus distinguishes the church from the Jews, saying that the church is a spiritual people, that is, such a people, which is not only distinguished from the heathen in police and civil nature, but is a true people of God, enlightened in heart and born again by the Holy Spirit."

We leave here some more statements of Luther and Lutheran teachers, in which they explain that the church consists only of believers.

Luther (*XVIII, 1023*): "Christ is the Lord of all things, of the pious and the wicked, of angels and devils, but he is not the head except of only the pious, faithful Christians gathered together in the Spirit. For a head must be united with his body, as I have proved from St. Paul, Eph. 4:15-16, and the members must cleave to the head, have their work and life from it. Therefore Christ may not be a head

1453) Cf. Luther's explanation of the second article.

of an evil community, though the same is subject to him as to a Lord. Just as his kingdom, Christendom, is not a physical community or kingdom, but everything that is spiritual, physical, infernal and heavenly is subject to him." — The same (V, 1234): "There [at Jerusalem] went in at the gates of the temple many wicked wretches, hypocrites, and sinners; but here at this gate of the Lord go in vain righteous and holy ones to serve God. For no one is or can be in the Christian community or a member of Christianity unless he is truly faithful, that is, righteous and holy, as the article of faith testifies: 'I believe a holy Christian church.' But he who is not faithful, nor holy and righteousness, does not belong to the holy Christian church and cannot enter this gate of the Lord, nor can he pray. He does not know God either, whether he lives among Christians in the flesh or has an office among Christians as a pastor, preacher, bishop, or even partakes of the sacrament outwardly, as 1 John 3:6 says: 'He that abideth in Him sinneth not; but he that sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him.' And again v. 8: 'He that committeth sin is of the devil.' And this is the article condemned in the laudable Council of Constance, together with this verse and the whole Holy Scriptures. For John Hus confessed at that time that there was a holy Christian church; if the pope were not pious and holy, he could not be a member, much less the head, of the holy church, even if he had the office within it; therefore he must be burned and cursed as a heretic. ... They oppose this and say: If the Pope, bishops and all of them sin equally much, they are nevertheless not of the devil nor of his synagogue, but are of Christ and of God, members and heads of holy Christendom. Yes, they are members of the church, just as saliva, snot, pus, sweat, dung, urine, stink, galls, pox, glands, and all plagues of the body are members; the same are also in and on the body; yes, like stains and filth, which the body has to bear with great driving, toil, and unwillingness."

Gerhard, *L. de eccl.*, § 151: *Dicitur ecclesia catholica primario ac πρώτως respectu electorum ac sanctorum, quatenus ambitu suo complectitur omnes in Christ vere credentes, totum illud mysticum corpus, cuius caput est Christus. Atque haec est genuina et propria huius vocabuli significatio, quomodo etiam accipitur in symbolo apostolico, quando dicimus: Credo unam sanctam*

catholicam ecclesiam, ubi vox credendi manifeste ostendit, de invisibili ecclesia sermonem esse, quod ipsum etiam annexum sanctitatis praedicatum demonstrat. [Google]

Baier, Comp. III, 617: Sic probatur, ecclesiam proprie dictam esse praecise coetum vere credentium et sanctorum. Nam (1) ad Eph. 4, 16 describitur ecclesia tanquam corpus spirituale, quod totum dependet a Christo secundum omnes iuncturas et compagines (quibus coagmentatum, in ratione unius corporis constituitur) velut a capite, hoc est, per influxum, qualis membris a capite debetur ad hoc, ut incrementum capiant corpori conveniens, idque per caritatem. Unde recte colligitur, eos omnes et solos esse vera membra ecclesiae proprie dictae, qui vita spirituali vivunt, ex supernaturali gratia et influxu Christi, capitis et spiritus eius, adeoque fide non qualicunque, sed supernaturali et cum caritate coniuncta pollent. Quo pertinet, (2) quod ecclesia 1 Petri 2, 4, 5 describitur ut domus spiritualis ex lapidibus vivis, exstructa super inum angularem lapidem, Christum, ita ut sit templum sanctum Domino, domicilium Dei per Spiritum Sanctum, quod non fit nisi per fidem in Christum, qua homines Christo velut causa salutis actu fidae nituntur, cum caritate coniunctam. Eodemque (3) facit, quod ecclesia comparatur oleae, eius autem rami, spirituali sensu dicti, per fidem inserti et per eandem in ea manere dicuntur, Rom. 11, 16 sqq. Et (4) quod ecclesia est coetus filiorum Dei; filii autem fiunt et sunt per fidem in Christum. [Google]

2. The false doctrines of the Church. ^

It is in the nature of things that all former doctrinal sins reappear in the doctrine of the Church. Since membership in the Christian Church is only mediated through faith in Christ, the scriptural doctrine of the church has the same prerequisites as the scriptural doctrine of justification by faith. It presupposes the objective reconciliation of the whole world of sinners through Christ's *satisfactio vicaria*, the presentation of the forgiveness of sins through the means of grace, the appropriation of the forgiveness of sins through faith, which comes into being and is sustained without human involvement, solely through the action of the Holy Spirit. Where these conditions are not present, consequently the scriptural concept of the Church is also abandoned. It is useful and necessary to explain this in more detail.

1. The Christian concept of the church presupposes the *satisfactio vicaria*. To all deniers of the *satisfactio vicaria*, the Christian church is not the congregation of believers, that is, of those who believe by the action of the Holy Spirit that they have a gracious God through Christ's substitutionary work, but a society of men who, prompted by Christ's example, the "historical Christ," etc., want to come to God by the way of their own morality (moral-influence theory). Thus, despite some differences in expression, the Unitarians of old (Photinians, Socinians, Rationalists) and of more recent times (Horace [Bushnell](#), Ritschl, Harnack of Berlin, [Eliot of Harvard](#)).¹⁴⁵⁴⁾ Whether one calls that which makes one a member of the Christian church "faith" or "love" or otherwise: in the denial of *satisfactio vicaria*, all explanations ultimately come down to Röhrs' definition of the church: the church is "a free association of rational beings for the realization of an earthly and heavenly bliss conditioned by religious enlightenment and virtue."¹⁴⁵⁵⁾ But it is not advisable to join or remain in this "church" because, according to Scripture, in the way of one's own morality, even if inspired by Christ's example or the "historical Christ," since the Fall, men do not enter the Christian church but remain under the curse¹⁴⁵⁶⁾ and sharply divorced from Christ and his church.¹⁴⁵⁷⁾ One should also not judge,¹⁴⁵⁸⁾ that men like Ritschl, Wendt and others have initiated a "return" to the original Lutheran concept of church, because they want to eliminate the "institutional" from the concept of church and prefer to call the church the "people of God," "true Christianity," etc. Because, in spite of the correct designation of the church as the "people of God" with the essential deity of Christ, they also deny the *satisfactio vicaria*, so to them "God's people" and "true Christianity" is merely a moral society.¹⁴⁵⁹⁾

1454) Cf. [II, 422 ff.](#): "Historical Information on the Doctrine of Vicarious Satisfaction" and "More Detailed Description of Modern Theories of Reconciliation".

1455) In Hase, [Hutt. red.](#), § 124.

1456) Gal. 3:10.

1457) Gal. 5:4; 4:21-31.

1458) Nitzsch-Stephan, [Ev. Dogmatik](#), p. 629 f.

1459) [Ritschl, Rechtf. u. Versöhnung 3 III, 271](#): "The kingdom of God is those who believe in Christ, provided that they ... act mutually out of love, and thus the fellowship of the moral mind and moral goods, which spreads out in all possible gradations to the limits of the human species. "

Luther judges of all who deny the "cost," that is, the vicarious satisfaction of Christ, that they are to be put in one class with "Turks and Jews."¹⁴⁶⁰ Incidentally, Horace Bushnell and also Ritschl are reported to have returned to belief in the *satisfactio vicaria* on their deathbeds.¹⁴⁶¹ — The Papal Church, to be sure, wants Christ's divinity and Christ's merit to stand. It even pronounces anathema on those who deny Christ's merit.¹⁴⁶² But it places next to Christ's merit as necessary for the attainment of grace and salvation the "keeping of the commandments of God and of the Church"¹⁴⁶³ and the merit of one's own works.¹⁴⁶⁴ Since the assertion of one's own works and one's own merit excludes from the attainment of God's grace and membership in the Christian church,¹⁴⁶⁵ the papal church, by its official doctrine, places itself outside of Christendom, *extra ecclesiam*.¹⁴⁶⁶ It then goes one step further with energy and pronounces excommunication on all those who, through faith in the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, want to become justified before God without their own works — that is, on the entire Christian church.¹⁴⁶⁷ In the struggle *pro domo*, the papal church lets the church consist of such men who submit to the supremacy of the Pope and his doctrines and commandments.¹⁴⁶⁸ That

Modern Unitarians are fond of using the expression "kingdom of God." The kingdom of God, however, is to them the kingdom in which God "asserts himself as sole ruler" for the moral betterment of mankind.

1460) St. L. XI, 1085.

1461) Cf. the quotations II, 442 ff. Strong, *Syst. Theology*, p. 739 sq; Trench, *Notes on the Parables of Our Lord*, on Luke 18:9-14.

1462) Trident, sess. VI, can. 10 a. 1463) Trident, op. cit. 20.


1464) Trident, op. cit. 32. 1465) Gal. 3:10; 5:4; Rom. 11:6.

1466) Cf. Luther in the Large Catechism, M. 458, 56 [Trigl. 693, Art. III, 56].

1467) Trident, sess. VI, can. 11. 12.

1468) Trident, sess. VI, *decretum de ref.*, c. 1, the pope is called *ipsius Dei in terris vicarius*. Let no one presume to understand Scripture *contra eum sensum, quem tenuit et tenet sancta mater ecclesia*, the pope's church. *Vatican II* of 1870 then adds explicitly that the pope's determinations on faith and life "*ex sese, non autem ex consensu ecclesiae, irreformabiles esse*." (The Canons and Decisions of the Vatican Council, ed. Schneemann, p. 45 sq.) Sess. IV, *decr. de usu s. librorum*. Bellarmin, therefore, describes *De eccl. milit.* c. 2, 9, the Church as *coetum hominum, eiusdem Christianae fidei professione et eorum sacramentorum communione colligatum, sub regimine legitimorum pastorum ac praecipue unius Christi in terris vicarii Romani pontificis*.

there are still members of the Christian church under the papacy is only due to the fact that baptized children believe in Christ and also otherwise souls in anguish of conscience and especially in distress of death, in spite of the "church" prohibition and curse, abandon their own works together with the merit of the saints and trust only in Christ's merit.¹⁴⁶⁹⁾ — But not only declared Unitarians and "liberal" theologians like Bushnell and Ritschl, but also "positive" ones like Hofmann and Kirn reject the *satisfactio vicaria*.¹⁴⁷⁰⁾ Hofmann is known to have strongly opposed the vicarious satisfaction of Christ.¹⁴⁷¹⁾ Kirn wants to include the remolding or reshaping of humanity's life into its Godly form in reconciliation with God.¹⁴⁷²⁾ This interference of sanctification with justification does not allow for faith in the forgiveness of sins acquired by Christ and offered in the means of grace, and thus for membership in the Christian church. All Protestant theologians who reject *satisfactio vicaria* as too "juridical" and want to include in reconciliation with God the "religious-moral" transformation of humanity have crossed over into Roman territory. To them, the Church is not the congregation of believers, but a society of men who supplement Christ's merit by reshaping or transforming their own lives, that is, by sanctification and their own works. It is not faith in what Christ did and suffered in the place of men nineteen hundred years ago that makes one a member of the Christian church, but that which Christ's atonement works in men, namely, the reshaping of their lives "into His Godly likeness." Kirn: "What thus unfolds in history is co-established for God's judgment in the accomplished work of redemption, and this its effective power is co-establishing for its value before God."¹⁴⁷³⁾ Hence Kirn's description of the Church "as the fellowship of the religious-moral life determined by Christ's Spirit."¹⁴⁷⁴⁾ In short, anyone who does not believe the perfect reconciliation of all mankind brought about by Christ's substitutionary satisfaction (the objective reconciliation),

1469) The Apology 151, 269-271 [*Trigl. 225, art. III, 269-271* Etiam si in ecclesia pontifices aut nonnulli theologi ac monachi docuerunt remissionem peccatorum, gratiam et iustitiam per nostra opera et novos cultus quaerere ..., mansit tamen apud aliquos pios semper cognitio Christi. [Google]

1470) *II, 429 ff.*

1471) *II, 431 ff.*

1472) *II, 472.*

1473) *Ev. Dogmatik, p. 118.*

1474) op. cit., *p. 130.*

has lost the object of justifying and saving faith; consequently, the Christian church is not the congregation of believers either, but a society of complements of Christ's merit. The fellowship of grace with God is not founded on *favor Dei propter Christum*, but on an imagined *gratia infusa*. The *gratia infusa* is an imaginary one because it is always present only as a consequence and effect of faith in *favor Dei propter Christum*. — It should also be noted that all those who want to limit the *satisfactio vicaria* extensively, that is, who do not want it to extend to all men, thereby abandon the Christian concept of the Church. If all men without distinction are not reconciled to God through Christ, the means of grace are not a sure revelation and presentation of God's gracious will to those who use them (thus not *testimonia, tesserae, signa, sigilla gratiae Dei propter Christ peccata remittentis*). Faith lacks the object by which it arises and exists. With the Calvinist limitation of the *satisfactio vicaria* to a part of the men, there can be no congregations of believers. That there is nevertheless still a church among the Calvinists is due to the fact that in the need of practice they refer the consciences struck by God's law to the general promises of grace and retire the *gratia particularis* invented at the study table.

The Christian concept of the church also presupposes the Christian doctrine of the means of grace. Adolf Harnack rebukes Luther for having allowed himself to become involved in a struggle over the means of grace.¹⁴⁷⁵⁾ Luther is said to have thus left the church a "disastrous legacy" and to have "retreated into the abandoned narrow circles of the Middle Ages by singling out certain actions as 'means of grace!'" But Luther knew very well why he had to fight the battle for "certain means of grace." We men need the means of grace in order to enter and remain in the Christian church. All those who, like Zwingli and Calvin, not only think that the Holy Spirit does not need a vehicle (*vehiculum, plaustrum*) for His revelation of grace and His efficacy of grace, but also teach positively that the effect of

1475) *Wesen des Christentums* 3, p. 183 f.; *Grundriß d. Dogmengesch.*⁴, p. 431.

saving grace takes place without means of grace and alongside them ("Efficacious grace acts immediately. Here is no place for the use of means"), thus absolutely abandon the Christian church. Here is no place for the use of means"), thus absolutely abandon the Christian church. The reason is this: Since the assumed immediate efficacy of the Holy Spirit is not a reality but an imagination, the church founded on it is also a mere imagination. That there is still a Christian church in the fellowships which officially teach the immediate efficacy of the Holy Spirit, comes only from the fact a) that, in contradiction with their official doctrine, they themselves are not silent, but still teach Christ's substitutionary satisfaction, and thereby give the Holy Spirit opportunity to work faith in the Gospel through the Gospel, b) from the fact that, likewise in direct contradiction with their official doctrine, they call the Word of the Gospel incidentally the foundation of faith, and call for faith in the Word.¹⁴⁷⁶⁾ — Among those who abandon the means of grace and thus the Christian concept of church are also the modern experiential theologians who want to base faith in Christ not only on Christ's Word, but besides that also on "the historical impression of the Person of Christ," the historical "appearance of Christ," and so on. Since it is clear from Scripture that the "Person of Christ" carries out all "impressions" for the gathering and preservation of the church through the Word,¹⁴⁷⁷⁾ the church conceived by modern experiential theologians is also a *non-ens*. No one has "experienced" Christ, and no one will experience Christ until the Last Day except through faith in the λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς, in the word of reconciliation accomplished through Christ. "Experiential theology" walks in the paths of the Zwinglian-Calvinian rapture of a spiritual revelation and spiritual activity apart from and apart from the external word of the gospel. If through the activity of the experiential theologians men still become faithful to Christ, this can only happen through the inconsistency that we also find in Zwingli, Calvin and their comrades.

3. The Christian concept of the church as the congregation of believers is also set aside by those who, together with Rome, teach the sacraments as an assignment of grace ex opere operato, that is, without faith

1476) So also Calvin, *Inst.* III, 2, p.

1477) Joh. 8:31-32; 17:20; 15:3; 6:63-69; 1 Tim. 6:3-5 etc.

being present on the part of man as a means of appropriation. Thus a number of more recent Lutherans who teach a kind of physical effect of the sacraments. Delitzsch expressly declares his dissent from the older Lutheran teachers who deny to all unbelievers membership in the church "which is the body of Christ."¹⁴⁷⁸⁾ In contrast, it is to be noted: As certain as the sacraments are absolutely reliable testimonies of God's gracious will toward all who use them, it is also certain that the grace witnessed and thereby offered is appropriated only through faith. Where there is no faith, there is no appropriation of grace, despite all the use of the sacraments, and therefore no membership in the Christian Church. Thus the thirteenth article of the Augustana teaches of the sacraments "that they are signs and testimonies of divine will toward us, to awaken and strengthen our faith thereby, for which reason they also require faith" [*Trigl. 49: Article XIII, #1-3*].¹⁴⁷⁹⁾

4. The faith by which a man becomes a member of the Christian Church is in *solidum* an effect of the Holy Spirit and does not stand "in some, the least, or the least part" in the free will of man.¹⁴⁸⁰⁾ Therefore, the church as "the congregation of believers" in the scriptural sense abandons all those who teach and seek to bring about a faith that is not in *solidum* an effect of the Holy Spirit, but also involves a human achievement, in that they cause faith to come into being and exist through a "moral human act," "inner resolution," "self-decision," "self-determination," "right conduct," a lesser guilt in comparison with others, etc. Also a binding with this "church" is not advisable. A church coming into existence by human will, inner resolution, self-determination, etc., would very soon be overwhelmed by the gates of hell. This is why the Scriptures so powerfully emphasize the divine establishment and preservation of the church.¹⁴⁸¹⁾ Because God alone works and maintains faith without human cooperation, He alone also establishes and maintains the Christian Church.

1478) Cf. the quotation in Baier-Walther *III, 620*; also the detailed evidence in the *2nd Synod Report of the Western District*. Writings that belong here are, among others: Franz Delitzsch, *Vier Bücher von der Kirche*, 1847; Loehe, *Kirche u. Amt*, 1851; Kliefoth, *Acht Bücher v. d. K.*, 1854; Münchmeyer, *Die Lehre v. d. sichtb. u. unsichtb. K.*, 1854.

1479) Cf. the evidence in *L. u. W.* that this is also the doctrine of the old Lutheran teachers, volume *1857, p. 4* ff; *1856, p. 144* ff.

1480) F. C. 594, 25. [*Trigl. 891, Sol. Decl., II, 25* , 1481) Ps. 100, 3; Rom. 11:4 f.

3. The characteristics of the Christian church. ^

1. The Church is invisible (*ecclesia invisibilis est*) because the constitutive factor of the church, faith in the heart, is invisible to men and known to God alone.¹⁴⁸²⁾ Therefore, when asked about the visible coming of the kingdom of God on earth, Christ answers Luke 17:20-21: "The kingdom of God does not come with outward signs" (μετά παρατηρήσεως, with or under observation, so that it might be seen with eyes); "neither will it be said, Behold, here or there it is! For behold, the kingdom of God is within you."¹⁴⁸³⁾ All those who declare the church to be completely visible (Romans) or half visible (newer Lutherans), are changing the Christian concept of the church. They do not let the church be the congregation of the faithful, but make it wholly or partly an external institution (*externa politia*), in which believing men play a more or less essential or insignificant role. Recent Lutherans also address two sides of the church, a "visible and invisible side." Word and sacrament are said to be the visible side of the church. But in this way the marks of the Church (*notae ecclesiae*) are confused with the Church itself. Between the Church and the means of grace there is indeed a necessary connection. The Church is generated by the means of grace, and she also lives by the means of grace alone. But the means of grace are therefore no more the Church itself or a part of the Church than, for example, air and food are man himself or a part of man, although man cannot live without air and food. *Notae ecclesiae*, on the other hand, are rightly called Word and Sacrament. As wheat is found where it is sown, so the Church is found where and only where God's Word is proclaimed. God's Word is called the seed of the Kingdom and has the promise that it shall bear fruit.¹⁴⁸⁴⁾ Through the *notae ecclesiae*, however, the church

1482) 1 Kings 8:39; Acts 1:24.

1483) Παρατήρησις only here in the New Testament. Election: *observatio*, μετά παρατηρήσεως, i. e., ita, ut oculis possit observari. The verb παρατηρεῖν meaning "to observe" is found more often, Mark. 3:2; Luke 6:7; 14:1; 20:20; Acts 9:24. Against the version of ἐντός υμῶν — "among you," "in your midst," Nösgen on this passage rightly remarks that it is contrary to the context, because what is among us or in our midst can also fall under sensual perception. Therefore "ἐντός υμῶν is to be grasped 'inwardly in you' (Luther, Calvin, Olshausen, Godet, Keil)."

1484) Is. 55:10 ff.

itself, the congregation of believers, does not become visible, because the constitutive factor, faith, remains invisible. On the one hand, it is God's will that we consider everyone who confesses the gospel with his mouth and does not withdraw the confession of his mouth by an ungodly walk to be a Christian according to love. On the other hand, it would be an encroachment on God's prerogative if we wanted to see the heart's opinion of the individual. The Scripture expressly warns against this.¹⁴⁸⁵⁾ Even if we were able to identify the individual members of the church by person and name, we would still not see the church, because only the old man in the Christians falls under the sense of sight, but the new man lives in this life deeply hidden in God.¹⁴⁸⁶⁾ Only on the Last Day will the members of the Christian Church be distinguished from the non-members by their outward appearance.¹⁴⁸⁷⁾ The halo on the images of the saints is painted there according to love.¹⁴⁸⁸⁾ The Romans, as we know, want the church to be as visible as the Kingdom of France and the Republic of Venice.¹⁴⁸⁹⁾ They ridicule an invisible Christian church as a Platonic idea, a mere thought thing, etc. To this derision must be opposed the truth that, according to the Scriptures, this invisible congregation of believers is the most powerful reality on earth, behind which stands the *ἐγὼ Κύριος τοῦς ὄντας αὐτοῦ*,¹⁴⁹⁰⁾ which the gates of hell shall not prevail against,¹⁴⁹¹⁾ which is the center of divine interest until the Last Day,¹⁴⁹²⁾ and to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the eternal kingdom.¹⁴⁹³⁾ On the other hand, the visible Roman church as the church of Christ is pure

1485) 1 Cor. 4:5. 1486) Col. 3:3; 2 Cor. 5:4.

1487) Col. 3:4; 1 John 3:2.

1488) Luther (IX, 702): "Therefore, in the holy Christian faith, we rightly confess that we believe in a holy church. For she is invisible, dwelling in the Spirit in a place where no one can approach; therefore her holiness cannot be seen." Calov, *Systema VIII*, 264: *Coetus, in quo est ecclesia, videri quidem ac dignosci et indice digito demonstrari potest, in quo sc. Verbum docetur et sacramenta dispensantur iuxta Christi mandatum; sed coetus ille, qui proprie est ecclesia, h. e., communio fidelium et sanctorum, non est visibilis nec demonstrari potest.* [[Google](#)]

1489) Bellarmin, *lib. 3, De eccl., c. 2: Ecclesia est coetus hominum ita visibilis et palpabilis, ut est coetus populi Romani vel regnum Galliae aut respublica Venetorum.* [[Google](#)] Cf. antithesis in Quenstedt II, 1640.

1490) 2 Tim. 2:19. 1491) Matt. 16:18.

1492) Rom. 8:28; Matt. 24:22-24. 1493) Luke 12:32.

fiction. Inasmuch as it is a Roman church, that is, subject not to Christ's but to the pope's word, and inasmuch as it bases the attainment of grace and salvation not only on Christ's merit but also on human merit, it is outside Christ's church both here on earth and in heaven.¹⁴⁹⁵⁾

2. The Church is one (*una ecclesia*), Joh. 10:16: μία ποιμήν, because all members of the Church, despite all differences in earthly relationships, believe the same thing about God, namely, that God forgives them sin by grace, for Christ's sake, without works of the law. Scripture most emphatically rejects any difference with regard to the constitutive element of the church. It is Rom. 3:23-24: "There is no difference here (διαστολή), they are all at once (πάντες) sinners, and lack the glory which they ought to have in God, and are justified without merit (δωρεάν) by his grace, through the redemption that was made by Jesus Christ." All who do not have this faith, whether they do not believe in Christ at all,¹⁴⁹⁶⁾ or whether they want to supplement Christ's merit by their own works, are not inside but outside the Church.¹⁴⁹⁷⁾ *Omnes Christiani de evangelio consentiunt*. Therefore Gal. 3:28: "Here is neither Jew nor Greek, here is neither bond nor free, here is neither male nor female; for ye are all at once one in Jesus Christ" (πάντες γάρ υμεῖς εἰς εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ).

3. The Church is holy (*sancta ecclesia*), a) because all members possess the perfect righteousness of faith through faith in Christ (*iustitia fidei imputata*), Phil. 3:9: μή εχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην την ἐκ νόμου, ἀλλὰ την διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, την ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τη πίστει; b) because all members by means of the same faith also possess a true, though imperfect, righteousness of life (*iustitia vitae*), Rom. 6:14: "Sin shall not be able to have dominion over you, because ye are not under the law, but under grace."

4. The Church is universal or catholic (*ecclesia universalis sive catholica*) because it embraces believers in Christ of all times, among all peoples and in all places. The Christian faith has never, in the course of time,

1494) Gal. 5:4; 3:10.

1495) Gal. 4:30. Cf. Luther against the visible church of the pope, St. L. XVIII, 1347 ff.

1496) 1 John 2:23; 5:12. 1497) Galatians 5:4; 3:10.

undergone any change in its content over time. It has always been faith in the forgiveness of sins through Christ's work of redemption. This is not, as is often claimed, a dogmatic construction of Luther and the old Lutheran teachers, but the doctrine of Christ's apostles and of Christ Himself. Peter Acts 10:43: "Of this [Christ] all the prophets testify, that through his name all who believe in him should receive forgiveness of sins." Christ John 8:56: "Abraham was glad that he should see my day, and he saw it and rejoiced." Paul proves justification, which is by faith, without works, from the Old Testament Scriptures¹⁴⁹⁸) and calls all who believe the gospel in the New Testament until the Last Day, regardless of their racial differences, etc., Children of Abraham, οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, οὗτοι υἱοὶ Ἀβραάμ,¹⁴⁹⁹) even seed of Abraham, σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ¹⁵⁰⁰) Luther (XII, 494 f.): "That we have forgiveness of sins not otherwise than for Christ's sake through faith has been the faith of the fathers and prophets and of all the saints from the beginning of the world, and afterward the doctrine and sermon of Christ and the apostles, which they were commanded to carry and spread throughout the world, and still to this day and to the end is the unanimous mind and attitude of the whole Christian church, who have all at one time believed, confessed, and contended for this article, that in this Lord Christ's name alone they might obtain and receive forgiveness of sins, and in this faith have been justified and saved in the sight of God."¹⁵⁰¹)

5. The church is apostolic (*ecclesia apostolica*) inasmuch as all its members believe in Christ until the Last Day through the word of the apostles, John 17:20: πιστευσοντες διά λόγον αὐτῶν εἰς ἐμέ, and hold fast to the word of the apostles, Acts 2:42: προσκαρτερονντες τή διδαχῇ τῶν ἀποστόλων, facing all dissenting doctrine, Rom. 16:17: "Depart from the same," namely, from those "who cause division and offence apart from the doctrine (παρά τήν διδαχήν) which ye have learned." That the Romans and Episcopalians place the apostolic character of the Church

1498) Rom. 4 whole. Rom. 3:21-31.

1499) Gal. 3:6 ff. 1500) Gal. 3:29.

1501) Schleiermacher followers. Alexander Schweizer says quite correctly (*Ref. Dogm.* II, 114): "The universal nature of Christianity cannot be shown more vividly than when it already occurs according to its essence after the first sin." Only Schweizer also reinterprets Gen. 3:15.

in the episcopal succession has rightly been described as childishness, since, firstly, the Scripture knows no difference between bishops and teaching elders or pastors ¹⁵⁰²⁾ and, secondly, it means avoiding all teachers who teach a doctrine other than the apostolic one, regardless of whether they are called bishops, elders or otherwise. ¹⁵⁰³⁾ This point is to be taken up again in the doctrine of the public ministry.

The proposition that outside the Church there is no salvation (*extra ecclesiam salus nulla*) is true of the Christian Church, false of the Church of the Pope. It is true of the Christian Church because only the men who believe the Gospel have God's grace and salvation. ¹⁵⁰⁴⁾ It is false of the Pope's church, because this grace and salvation is also based on the law ¹⁵⁰⁵⁾ and thus leaves its members under the curse of the law. ¹⁵⁰⁶⁾

4. The majesty and glory of the Christian Church. ^

The members of the Christian church, as a church, are subject only to Christ, but to no man, 1 Cor. 3:23: "Ye are Christ's," *ὑμεῖς Χριστόν*; Matt. 23:8: "One is your Master, Christ; but you are all brethren." Christians are strongly exhorted to maintain this sovereignty in the face of all claims to supremacy which may be asserted, 1 Cor. 7:23: "Ye are bought with a dear price; become not the servants of men." The Pope, who claims under Christ's name that all Christians are subject to him, is *eo ipso* the Antichrist, of whom 2 Thess. 2 is addressed, and against whose arrogance, covered with Christian pretense (lying powers, signs and wonders), Christians are still especially warned. It is true that Christ gives special gifts to individual members of His Church, and among these also the special gift of teaching and governing other Christians. But this does not make the members of the Church subject to men, because all doctrines and governance among Christians do not extend further than their one Master's word. ¹⁵⁰⁷⁾ The teachers who want to teach beyond Christ's word consider them, according to the instructions of Scripture, to be puffed-up know-nothings, ¹⁵⁰⁸⁾ and those who

1502) Acts 20:17, 28; Tit. 1:5 (coll. 7).

1503) Rom. 16:17; Gal. 1:6-8.

1504) Joh. 3:16-18, 36.

1505) Trid., sess. VI, can. 20.

1506) Gal. 3:10.

1507) 1 Pet. 4:11; Jer. 23:16, 18.

1508) 1 Tim. 6:3 ff.

want to give them commandments beyond Christ's word, for example, those who prohibit people from getting married and dare to impose dietary and fasting laws see them as arrogant fraudsters and spreaders of doctrines of the devil.¹⁵⁰⁹⁾ The Pope can impose a fast on himself, but not on any other man in the world. Even the high apostles as human persons are not subject to Christians. The Smalcald Articles say, "Neither Peter nor other ministers of the Word may ascribe to them some power or supremacy over the Church," and they justify this correctly by 1 Cor. 3:21 ff: "All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos, whether Cephas or the world." True, Christians have the infallible word of Christ through the apostles, and to the word of Christ they are subject. But even in the infallible presentation of the Word of Christ, the apostles are only the servants of the believers. The believers are not there for the sake of the apostles, but the apostles are there for the sake of the believers, wherefore also Paul expressly says: "We preach not ourselves, but Lord Jesus as the Lord, but ourselves servants for Jesus' sake" (εαυτούς δε δονλονς υμών διά Ἰησοῦν). It is not between the Christians and their God that Mary or Peter or the apostles or other men stand as mediators, but through faith in Christ all believers have immediate access to God.¹⁵¹⁰⁾ They and no one else in the world and in the Church are the original possessors of the means of grace.¹⁵¹¹⁾ It does not stand that they have the means of grace only indirectly because Christ gave them to certain individuals in the church (pope, bishops, a preaching class) for original possession. And because they are in possession of the means of grace, they are also in possession of the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.¹⁵¹²⁾ They and no one else among men have the appointment of the public Ministry. Their confession of Christ as the Son of the living God, or what is the same: their proclamation of the Gospel in the world, is the rock on which Christ builds His Church.¹⁵¹³⁾ Not only is the government of the world and the universe carried out in their interest,

1509) 1 Tim. 4:1 ff; Col. 2:20 ff. 1510) Eph. 3:12; Hebr. 4:16.


1511) 1 Pet. 2:9; Is. 40:9; Matt. 28:18-20 etc. All of these points will be discussed in more detail later.

1512) Matt. 16:19; 18:18; Joh. 20:23.

1513) Thus Luther correctly wrote in the marginal gloss to Matt. 16:18: "All Christians are Peter because of the confession that Peter

makes here, which [confession] is the rock from which Peter and all Peters are built." The relation of "rock" to the person of Peter, either as apostle *primarius*, or as representative of the apostles, is entirely excluded, 1. by the context, 2. by the wording. As for the context, neither the preceding nor the following speaks of Peter as an Apostle, but only of Peter as a faithful person. Christ asks his disciples what the audience, οἱ ἄνθρωποι, thought of him. When the disciples report that the people were divided, but agreed that Christ was a mere man, Christ asks the disciples, not about their apostolate, but about their faith. And when Peter confesses the faith of the disciples with the words, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," and this faith is acknowledged by Christ to be the right faith wrought by God, Christ speaks the words, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church," and adds by way of explanation, "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: all that thou shalt loose from the earth," etc. From the context it stands clear that nothing is said here about Peter as an apostle, but the whole statement goes to Peter, in so far as he believes rightly of Christ and confesses this faith. Furthermore: That the person of the apostle Peter is completely left out and only the believing and confessing Peter is taken into consideration, stands for the fact that Christ gives the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Peter in ch. 18:18 with exactly the same words to all believers: "What you will bind on earth" etc.. But also the wording: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my congregation" forbids to refer the "rock" to the person of Peter. That Peter and the rock find two quite different things is evident from the fact that — as Luther states it popularly but clearly — that Peter is a "*der*" (masculine), the rock a "*die*" (feminine) (XX, 282). In the German or English translation, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," the difference does not appear so clearly, because in German "Petrus" and "Fels" are both a "der," namely, both of masculine generation. In Greek, however, the rock is a "the" (feminine) (ἡ πέτρα), while Peter (πέτρος) is a "the" (masculine). The difference comes out if we render the passage something like this: You are Petros (πέτρος), and on this Petra (ἐπὶ παντὶ τῇ πέτρᾳ) I will build my church. So Luther also already in 1519 against Eck in his *Epistola ad monachos conventus Iutterboccensis et defensio contra malignum Ioh. Eccii iudicium*, *Opp. v. a. II, 477 sqq.*, St. L. XVIII, 1375 f. After Luther points out that otherwise in Scripture Peter is not called the Rock, he continues: "Also in this passage [Matt. 16:18] Christ clearly distinguishes Peter from *petra*. For if by *petra* he had meant Peter, he would have said: 'Thou art Peter, and upon thee will I build my church'; but since he puts the word *petra* the second time, he clearly indicates that another is Peter, another is *petra*, which he distinguishes from Peter by the pronoun *hanc*" (this, feminine) "from Peter. And so I will easily defend from the present text that Eck cannot show that Peter is the *petra* (the rock)." Meyer, too, contrary to context and text, relates the πέτρα to the person of the Apostle and therefore also wants to grant Peter a primacy among the apostles. Only he rejects the Roman consequences, namely the relation to

but insofar as they possess through faith everything that Christ possesses and do everything that Christ does,¹⁵¹⁴ they are owners of the universe, the world and all the conditions of the world, 1 Cor. 3:21 f.: "All things are yours ..., whether Cephas or the world, whether life or death, whether things present or things to come: all things are yours." Meyer's restriction "in the future αἰών" is entered. The text does not have this restriction. In short, Christians are the richest and most powerful society in the world. Through faith in Christ, the floodgates of grace and blessing of heaven have opened over them. The believers have everything, the unbelievers nothing.

the Pope, "since Jesus has no successors of Peter in mind, nor are the popes such successors". The latter is true, but the former is not. Christ does, however, have successors of Peter in mind, because what he states ch. 16 of Peter, ch. 18 he promises to all believers. If Meyer wants to be consistent with the context and text of Matt. 16:18, he must come back from Luther's explanation of the passage, namely, to the explanation: "All Christians are Peter because of the confession that Peter makes here, which is the rock from which Peter and all the Peters find themselves built." If Meyer thinks that in the Smalcald Articles Luther's explanation of xxxxx "generalized to the concept of *verum ministerium*," this is a mistake. The Smalcald Articles expressly declare *verum ministerium to be ministerium illius professionis, quam Petrum fecerat*. [Google] In the German text (333, 25 [Trigl. 511, ibid., 25 ]): "But that it standeth: 'And upon this rock I will build my church,' it must ever be confessed that the church is not built out of the power of any man, but is built out of the ministry which leads the confession which Peter makes, namely, that Jesus is the Christ and Son of God." "Christ, the Son of the living God," is a brief designation of the whole content of the Gospel which the Church has to confess or preach in the world, and on which at the same time the Church itself stands with its faith. A factual parallel is Eph. 2:20. But the apostle's word and confession to Christ and of Christ is no other word and confession than the one commanded to all believers. Luther's version of Matt. 16:18 is found not only among the old theologians (cf. Calov on the passage), but also among more recent ones (Lange, Ewald, Wieseler). Here, too, the bad habit of unnecessarily increasing the number of different expositions has crept into the commentaries. Thus, two different expositions of πέτρα are usually cited as 1. Christ, 2. the confession of Christ. In fact, we are dealing with only one exposition, since faith never stands directly, but always only indirectly on Christ, namely, on the Christ whom Peter, the apostles, and all Christians confess (profitentur, praedicant).

1514) Cf. the section "Value and Effect of the Prayer of Christians," p. 98 ff.

5. The origin and preservation of the church. [△]

Since faith, by which a man becomes a member of the Christian church, comes into being and exists solely through God's grace and power,¹⁵¹⁵⁾ Scripture also emphasizes that the church is neither entirely nor partly the work of man, but solely the work and effect of God. Ps. 100:3: "He has made us, and not we ourselves, His people and sheep of His pasture"; 1 Peter 2:9-10: He "has called you from darkness to his marvelous light, who once would not be a people, but now are God's people, and once would not be in grace, but now are in grace" (οἱ οὐκ ἠλεημένοι, νυν δὲ ἐλεηθέντες). By God's grace and power alone, the Church is preserved even against the gates of hell. By the synergistic doctrine that faith and the preservation of faith depend not on God's grace alone, but also on human good conduct, the church is moved away from its reason for existence. The means or instrument God uses for the gathering and preservation of the church is the gospel in all forms of witness (word and sacrament), because only from the gospel does faith arise and exist.¹⁵¹⁶⁾ Insofar as the Reformed doctrines that the effect and preservation of the saving faith does not take place through the means of grace, but directly, they deprive the Church of the conditions of existence. Men are means (*causa instrumentalis*) for the propagation and preservation of the church only insofar as they preach and teach the doctrine of the gospel.¹⁵¹⁷⁾ In this sense Gal. 4:26 also calls the church on earth¹⁵¹⁸⁾ the "mother" of all those who are children after Isaac. Luther (IX, 676 f.): "Sara or Jerusalem is our free mother, the church, Christ's bride, from whom we are all born. But she begets children without cessation to the end of the world by exercising the ministry of the word, that is, by teaching and propagating the doctrine, for that is to give birth.... The church should do nothing but teach the gospel rightly and purely, and thus bear children. Thus we are all fathers and children among ourselves, for we are born one of another. I, who have been born of others through the

1515) Eph. 1:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:5; Joh. 1:13.

1516) Rom. 10:17; 1 Pastor. 1:23-25. Cf. Luther's classic exposition on Ps. 110:3 (St. L., V, 990 ff.) and on Is. 2:2 ff. (VI, 21 ff.).

1517) Is. 40:9; Mark. 16:15.

1518) Cf. Luther IX, 573 f.

gospel, now bear others, who afterward bear others again, and so this bearing will continue until the end of the world. ... Therefore it is the duty of the free woman to bear children to her husband, God, without ceasing, that is, such children as know that they are justified by faith, not by law."


The question of whether the state with its orders and means of coercion is to be used as a kind of auxiliary means of grace for the building of the church has already been dealt with in detail under the section "Means of Grace".¹⁵¹⁹⁾ It was also stated there that the mixing of state and church was a characteristic of the Roman and Reformed churches, but was rejected in principle by the Lutheran church. It was also explained there how the use of state orders and means of power does not promote but hinders the building of the church, which is now the congregation of believers and comes into being and exists only through the gospel, when the wrong principle bears its natural fruits. These fruits are also before our eyes here in the United States.¹⁵²⁰⁾ On the other hand, it should be emphatically pointed out that even the free church constitution is not in itself a means of grace. So completely does everything in the church come down to the pure doctrines of the gospel. Every church fellowship, in spite of a free church constitution, remains a caricature of the Christian church if in it "the gospel is not preached purely and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel."¹⁵²¹⁾ This, too, is illustrated by the state of the church in the United States.¹⁵²²⁾

1519) p. 210 ff.

1520) Although the separation of church and state is pronounced in the Constitution of both the United States and most of the individual states, in practice church and state are often mixed. One species of this mixture is the appointment of chaplains on the part of the individual states and the United States. Since in our country, too, the great majority of the citizens are non-Christians, in most cases only those chaplains are appointed who do not consider the sermon of Christ but the doctrines of civil morality to be Christianity. Others, who have a better knowledge of the Christian religion, very often succumb — in view of the mixed audience — to the danger of denying Christ in his vicarious work of redemption.

1521) Augsburg Conf., art. 7 [[Trigl. 47](#) [Q](#)].

1522) In spite of the free church constitution, the Protestant church fellowships, including some calling themselves Lutheran, are by and large

Is it the task of the church also to advocate a certain form of secular governance? Zwingli wants to introduce democracy, if there is no other way, by revolution.¹⁵²³⁾ Calvin rejects revolution but prefers oligarchy.¹⁵²⁴⁾ Episcopalians and Lutherans advocated monarchy. The Lutheran Church does not advocate democracy, oligarchy, or monarchy, but recognizes the existing form of government as the divine order. Augsburg Confession, Art. 16 [from the German; [Trigl. 51, XVI](#) tamquam ordinationes Dei), and in such statuses to demonstrate Christian love and right good works each according to his calling. Therefore, Christians are obliged to be subject to the authorities and to obey their commandments in everything that may be done without sin. For if the commandment of the authorities cannot be done without sin, one should be more obedient to God than to men. Act. 5:29." This position is Scriptural. Christ was falsely accused of standing according to the crown of the Roman emperor; for he taught, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."¹⁵²⁵⁾ Likewise Peter exhorts Christians, "Fear God, honor the king!"¹⁵²⁶⁾ Paul tells Christians not to cause revolution, but to intercede "for kings and for all authorities," so that we may "lead a quiet and tranquil life" under their government; "for such is good, and also acceptable in the sight of God our Savior."¹⁵²⁷⁾

Perhaps a few words should be said here about the limits within which persons in authority, who are at the same time Christians, must keep themselves with regard to the promotion of the church. Köstlin says of Luther: "As much as Luther insists that the secular authorities may not force anyone to believe or to follow doctrines, so vague are his statements about their intervention

an apostasy from Christianity. Not the *satisfactio vicaria*, but a morality inspired by Christ's example is preached in most Protestant churches. Not only church members, but also pastors are lodge members in large numbers.

1523) Cf. p. 212 ff. and the citations 777, 778.

1524) *Inst.* IV, 20, 8. 1525) Matt. 22:21; Luke 23:2.

1526) 1 Pet. 2:17, 13.

1527) 1 Tim. 2:1-3; Rom. 13:1-7; Jer. 29:7.

against public offences and iniquities in doctrine and sermon."¹⁵²⁸) Is not the seeming vagueness of Luther's statements connected with the double position in which the Christian finds himself as a Christian and as a person in authority? On the one hand, it is important to note that the secular governance as such has neither the right nor the duty to command or order anything in church matters. On the other hand, it stands firm that even persons in authority, provided they are Christians, cannot nor should forget their Christianity. Just as a Christian should serve the church with everything that is given to him by God, so also the prestige and influence that are bound up with a high worldly position should benefit the church. In any case, it is not right for a Christian, having attained a high worldly position, to now carefully conceal his Christianity. On the one hand, the Scriptures point out that not many wise men according to the flesh, not many powerful men, not many noble men are called, 1 Cor. 1:26. On the other hand, the Holy Spirit did not forget to mention that even people who were respected in the world, like Dionysius, the councilor of Athens, and high officials like Erastus, the treasurer of the city of Corinth, belonged to the Christian congregation, Acts 17:34; Rom. 16:23. Walther expresses this (*Pastorale*, p. 368) thus: "As the rich man with his money, the artist with his art, serve out of love, without for that reason claiming a right before others in the church, so should" (according to Luther's view) "the princes with their power serve not on the basis of a right due them before others in the church, but of a duty of love resting on them." But where is the limit here, and indeed the limit also of the "duty of love"? Rome and Romanizing Protestants also refer to the duty of love when they make the double demand, first, that the state is to be governed with the Word of God or with "Christian principles," and second, that the state is to regard itself as an organ of the church and is also to place itself at its disposal with means of coercion. So where is the limit? It is given in the twofold realization, first, that the state cannot nor should be governed with God's Word, but is to be composed and governed by natural reason, second, that the church cannot and should not be built by power and coercion, but only by God's Word, and that all external coercion in matters of faith becomes an obstacle to the church, unless God afterwards makes good what men have done wrong.

¹⁵²⁸) Luther's Theology II, 281.

Local Churches. [^] (*De ecclesiis particularibus.*)

1. The concept of local church or local congregation. [^]

What has been said so far has served to describe the one universal church scattered throughout the world, which is expressly called "one" (μία ποιμνὴ), and which is guaranteed by divine promise to continue securely and uninterruptedly until the end of the world.¹⁵²⁹⁾ But Scripture also addresses churches in the plural in a whole series of passages, namely, churches located in individual and certain places in the world. Thus 1 Cor. 16:10: "the churches (congregations) in Asia" (αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Ἀσίας); 1 Cor. 1:2: "the church of God in Corinth" (ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ οὖσα ἐν Κορίνθῳ); Acts 8:1: "the church at Jerusalem" (ἡ Ἐκκλησία ἡ ἐν Ἱερουσαλὺμοις); Rom. 16:16: "The churches" (ἐκκλησίαι, plural) "of Christ" greet you; 1 Cor. 11:16: "The churches" (ἐκκλησίαι, plural) "of God are not in the habit of quarreling." These churches are called *ecclesiae particulares*, local churches or local congregations. They are churches to which one can write and also address orally. Of course, the address of local churches is also Acts 20:28: "Take heed ... to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has made you bishops, to feed the congregation of God"; 1 Tim. 3:6: "If anyone does not know how to preside over his own house, how will he care for the congregation of God" (τῆς ἐκκλησίας θεοῦ ἐπιμελήσεται); Acts 14:27: "They gathered the congregation" (τὴν ἐκκλησίαν); Acts 14:23: "They ordained them elders in the congregations" (κατ' ἐκκλησίαν); Matt. 18:17: "Tell it to the congregation" (εἶπε τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ); 1 Cor. 14:23: "If therefore the whole congregation came together in one place."¹⁵³⁰⁾

But what is the relationship of the local churches to the universal church? The universal church and the local churches are not two churches or two kinds of churches, but the universal church is the sum of the local churches, with the addition of the individual believers who are closed off from all external church fellowship. When we address a local Christian church, we always mean only those Christians or believers who are found in the visible fellowship.

1529) Matt. 16:18; Rom. 11:2-5.

1530) Cf. the complete enumeration, e.g., in Wahl's *Clavis sub ἐκκλησία*.

Even the local churches consist only of believers. Just as the wicked and the hypocrites do not belong to the universal church, they do not form a part of the local church. This is clear doctrine of the Scriptures. When Paul writes to the Corinthian local church, he addresses them as "the sanctified in Jesus Christ, the called saints" (ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, κλησίοις ἁγίοις). Also, all the duties performed by the local churches, e.g., mutual instruction and exhortation,¹⁵³¹⁾ the practice of church discipline,¹⁵³²⁾ the supervision of doctrine and teachers,¹⁵³³⁾ the preaching of the gospel,¹⁵³⁴⁾ the holy walk¹⁵³⁵⁾ etc., presuppose faith in Christ in every case. The hypocrites in the congregation are to be told the same thing that is to be preached to unbelievers outside the congregation, namely, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted!"¹⁵³⁶⁾ A local church is therefore to be defined thus: The local church is the congregation of believers gathered around Word and Sacrament in a particular place.¹⁵³⁷⁾

2. The local church is a divine order. ^

The question has been discussed whether the formation of local congregations, or the affiliation with already existing local congregations, is left to the option of the Christians, or is divine

1531) Col. 3:16-17. 1532) 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Matt. 18:17.

1533) Rom. 16:17; Col. 4:17. 1534) 1 Pet. 2:9.

1535) 1 Pet. 3:8-17 etc. 1536) Acts 3:19.

1537) Walther therefore also defines a local Lutheran congregation as "a gathering of believing Christians in a certain place, in which the Word of God is preached purely according to the confession of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the holy sacraments are administered according to Christ's institution according to the Gospel. (*Die rechte Gestalt*, p. 1 [[Walther and the Church](#), p. 88]) Exactly, therefore, speak those old theologians who say that the hypocrites also do not form a part (*pars*) of the local church. Thus Dannhauer, *Hodos*. p. 61: *Non sunt hypocritae quidem membra ecclesiae invisibilis, nec visibilis verae, sed tamen visibilis aggregatae, ut zizania non est pars' agri triticeae, qua talis, tamen pars est agri totius aggregati ex tritico et zizania*. [[Google](#)] Calov, *Systema VIII*, 253 sq.: *Etsi hypocritae sint in coetu illo, in quo est ecclesia, non tamen in coetu proprie sunt, qui est ecclesia. ... Non facimus geminam ecclesiam, aliam sanctorum, aliam mixtam, sed hanc tantum nostris distinctionem esse dicimus, qua δμουνως vox ecclesiae accipitur, semel pro coetu fidelium, iterum pro conventu, in quo fidelibus admixti reperiuntur hypocritae*. [Nor does [Art. 8 of the Augustana](#) [[Trigl. 47, VIII](#)] say that false Christians and hypocrites form an integral part of the Church, but only that they can be organs of the Church insofar as the means of grace remain vigorous even when administered by wicked ones.

order. The question is of great practical importance, since at all times there have been people who, while claiming to be Christians, wanted the connection to a local church to be regarded as a matter of Christian freedom, that is, as an adiaphoron.¹⁵³⁸⁾ We must say: 1. Because it is God's will and command that Christians who are in one place should not only read God's Word for themselves, but also enter into external fellowship with one another, hear God's Word in public sermon, and thus establish the public ministry among themselves and, where it is established, use it;¹⁵³⁹⁾ 2. Because not only the individual Christian is obligated to admonish and rebuke the sinning brethren, but also the whole local congregation is commanded to exercise Christian discipline in its members;¹⁵⁴⁰⁾ 3. Because especially the celebration of Holy Communion is not merely an ecclesiastical, but a divine order for the exercise of brotherly fellowship.¹⁵⁴¹⁾ Thus also the formation of local Christian congregations and the connection to them is not a human, but a divine order.¹⁵⁴²⁾ This is the basis of our church practice, that we do not accept "resignation" from membership in the Christian congregation, because neither individuals in the congregation nor a whole congregation has power to dispense with a divine order. In contrast, the binding of local congregations into larger church associations (into conferences, synods, etc.) does not qualify as a divine order. The commandment, "Tell the church!" (εἶπε τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ), according to the context, goes to the local church, and beyond that is not to be asserted as a divine order. "Tell it to the synod!" etc. is a human order. Therefore Walther says

1538) This prompted Walther's writing, "On the Duty of Christians to Join a Local Orthodox Church." St. Louis 1880.

1539) This point will be presented in more detail under the following section, "The Public Ministry of Preaching."

1540) Matt. 18:17: "Tell the congregation; if he does not hear the congregation, consider him a heathen and publican"; 1 Cor. 5:13: "Put out from among yourselves" (the congregation is addressed) "him who is evil"; 2 Cor. 2:8: "I exhort you" (the congregation) "to prove love in him" (the penitent)."

1541) 1 Cor. 10:17; 11:17-21. 33.

1542) Walther, *Kirche u. Amt*, p. 144 ff. [*Church and Ministry*, 101, *Walther and the Church*, p. 68]: "Every Christian, for the salvation of his soul, is bound to profess and hold to the orthodox congregations and their orthodox pastors, where he finds such.

correctly: "That a church government binding of several congregations into one larger church body, e.g. by means of a synod with visitation power, a so-called superior board [*Oberkirchenkollegium*], a consistory, a bishop, etc., is not of divine but only of human right and therefore not absolutely necessary, there can be no doubt about this, since there is no commandment for it.¹⁵⁴³⁾ This is the basis of our synodical practice that we accept resignations from synodical membership, however, when a congregation, despite having held proceedings, persists in declaring that under its circumstances it should rescind synodical membership.

3. Orthodox and heterodox churches. ^

We must divide the actually existing local congregations and larger church fellowships into two classes according to the position they occupy in relation to Christian doctrine. It is God's will and command that in His church also His Word of God be preached and believed purely, that is, without admixture of man's doctrines. Whoever addresses God's church should not speak his own word, but God's Word. Straw and wheat do not rhyme together. "Teaching otherwise," ἐτεροδιδασκαλεῖν, is strictly forbidden.¹⁵⁴⁴⁾ It must always be remembered that not a single passage is found in all of Scripture that permitted a teacher to depart from God's doctrine, or allowed a child of God to make fellowship with a teacher who departed from God's Word. God is against the prophets who preach their own word,¹⁵⁴⁵⁾ and all Christians without exception are commanded to depart from them.¹⁵⁴⁶⁾ The distinction between orthodox and heterodox churches is based on this divine order. A church which keeps to the divine order, in which, therefore, the Word of God is taught purely and the sacraments are administered according to the divine institution, is rightly called an orthodox church (*ecclesia orthodoxa, pura*). On the other hand, a church that allows false doctrines

1543) *Pastorale*, p. 393 f. Cf. also the longer proof that this is Lutheran doctrine.

1544) 1 Tim. 1:3: "I exhorted you to remain at Ephesus while I was going into Macedonia, that you might command some not to teach otherwise", ἵνα παραγγείλῃς τισι μὴ ἐτεροδιδασκαλεῖν

1545) Jer. 23:31.

1546) Rom. 16:17; 1 Tim. 6:3 ff.

in its midst in contradiction with the divine order is rightly called a heterodox church (*ecclesia heterodoxa, impura*).¹⁵⁴⁷⁾ That this difference between the church communities be recognized and maintained should be of the utmost concern to all children of God, since especially in our time indifference to Christian doctrine has swept over external Christianity like a flood, and the abrogation of creeds and the substitution of a so-called "practical Christianity" (applied Christianity) is presented as a goal to be striven for.¹⁵⁴⁸⁾ A twofold remark is still in place when it comes to determining the orthodox character of a church fellowship: 1. A church fellowship is orthodox only by the fact that the orthodox doctrine is actually taught in it from all pulpits and in all its writings, not already by the fact that it only "officially" professes the orthodox doctrine, as it exists, for example, in the Augsburg Confession and in the other confessions of the Lutheran Church. It is not the "official" doctrine that should be taught, but the doctrine that is actually in force that determines the character of a church fellowship, because Christ's order is that everything that he has commanded his disciples should actually be taught, not merely recognized as right doctrine by an "official" document. It is also obvious that only through the pure gospel actually taught is faith in Christ worked and preserved. 2 A church fellowship does not lose its orthodox character by false doctrines occasionally appearing in it. What the apostle Paul announces to the elders of Ephesus: "Even of yourselves shall men stand forth speaking perverse doctrines to draw disciples unto themselves",¹⁵⁴⁹⁾ not only became true in the apostolic Church, but also became true in the Church of the Reformation and will

1547) Orthodox churches in our time are the Lutheran congregations and church fellowships that actually teach and confess the doctrines set forth in the confessional writings of this church, because the doctrines set forth, as an examination reveals, find the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. Impure or heterodox churches are the Roman Church, the Reformed Church with its many subdivisions, also the fellowships calling themselves Lutheran, which do not actually teach and confess the doctrines of the Church of the Reformation.

1548) *The Expansion of Religion*. By E. Winchester Donald, Rector of Trinity Church in the City of Boston, [1896, p. 125](#).

1549) Acts 20:30

remain true in the church until the Last Day. A church loses the predicate "orthodox" only when it no longer acts according to Rom. 16:17, i.e. does not punish and finally eliminate the emerging error, but lets it go unchallenged and thus actually grants it equal rights with the truth. As for the expression "church" and "sect," note that we call the heterodox fellowships both "churches" and "sects," according as we look to the good or to the evil in them. We call them churches insofar as, in addition to their erroneous doctrines, so much of the gospel of Christ is still spoken in them that faith in Christ can thereby arise, and thus true children of God are still found in their midst. We call them sects insofar as they deviate from the Christian doctrine, have constituted themselves on the basis of these deviations and have thus caused division in the church, and also form a standing danger to the faith of the children of God through their false doctrines and their special existence.

4. Even in heterodox churches there are children of God. [△]

As certain as it is that all local churches are to be faithful, and all fellowships that are heterodox exist as such only under God's permission and against God's gracious will, the fact must be noted that believing children of God are found in the heterodox fellowships as well. There are more Christians than orthodox Christians in all matters. Although Christ very clearly denies the Samaritans the right to exist as a separate church fellowship,¹⁵⁵⁰⁾ he repeatedly gives individual Samaritans the testimony of true sonship with God,¹⁵⁵¹⁾ Luther, too, was far from limiting the *una sancta* to the orthodox Lutheran church. As vehemently as he fights the papacy and expressly calls it a foundation of the devil, he does not doubt that God has at all times preserved a Christianity, even the "elite" of Christianity, even under the Papacy.¹⁵⁵²⁾ Furthermore: As seriously as Luther fights Carlstadt, Zwingli and comrades because of their deviation from the Word of God, he nevertheless admits that

1550) Joh. 4:22.

1551) Luke 17:16; 10:33.

1552) St. L. XVII, 1019 ff. Furthermore V, 468: "Under the papacy there have always been some believers, and there still are, whom we do not know, whom God sustains by the Word and the sacraments, although the devil and the pope do not like to see it."

children of God have made fellowship with these pseudo-reformers without knowing about the evil thing.¹⁵⁵³⁾ Likewise, the old Lutheran teachers "zealous for orthodoxy" firmly reject identifying the *una sancta* with the orthodox Lutheran Church.¹⁵⁵⁴⁾ The Fathers of the Missouri Synod call it a slander to the Lutheran Church to ascribe to itself the doctrine that it limits the Church of God to the boundaries of the Lutheran Church.¹⁵⁵⁵⁾ Positively, they taught: If a person holds fast in his heart to the central article of Christian doctrine, that is, if he believes that God is gracious to him for the sake of Christ's *satisfactio vicaria*, he is a member of the Christian church, no matter in what ecclesiastical camp he may be outwardly. The doctrine to the contrary overturns the central article of Christianity, the doctrine of justification. Walther:¹⁵⁵⁶⁾ According to Rom. 3:28; Acts 4:12 "fellowship with Christ through faith is absolutely and solely necessary for salvation. The principle: 'Apart from the church there is no salvation' — 'Whoever does not have the church on earth for a mother, does not have God in heaven for a father' is therefore only true in the sense that apart from the invisible church there is no salvation and no divine childship of grace; for this means nothing else than: For he who does not stand in inward fellowship with the believers and saints does not stand in fellowship with Christ; but he who stands in fellowship with Christ through faith stands in fellowship with all those in whom Christ dwells, that is, with the invisible church. Whoever therefore binds salvation to fellowship with any visible church, thereby overthrows the article of the justification of a poor sinner before God by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone."

5. Church fellowship with heterodox churches is against the divine order. (Unionism) ^

As is well known, the fact that there are children of God in irreligious churches is cited as a reason why it is right, indeed required by love, to make fellowship with heterodox churches. Scripture teaches just the opposite,

1553) St. L. IX, 44. 1554) The evidence in Baier III, 646 ff.

1555) Walther, *Kirche u. Amt*, pp. 95-113. [Walther and the Church, p. 65]

1556) K. u. A., p. 160 f. [Walther and the Church, p. 70]

namely, "Depart from the same!"¹⁵⁵⁷⁾ The unionist argument is also naturally unreasonable. The old Lutheran doctrines point to 2 Sam. 15:11 as an illustration. As little as the fact that two hundred citizens of Jerusalem went with Absalom out of ignorance entitled the rest of Israel to join the rebel camp or even to flirt with the rebels, so little does the fact that a number of Christians make fellowship with false teachers out of ignorance against God's order entitle other Christians to do the same. To invoke love for this purpose is an abuse of the word. Love for God and for the brethren demands just the opposite. He who loves Christ also loves Christ's word, and to Christ's words belongs above all the word of shunning all those who teach something other than Christ's word. And to love the brethren belongs first of all also the practice that we do not err and sin with them, but seek to rid them of error and sin. Finally, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments expressly declare that God sends false teachers so that Christians may avoid them, not so that Christians may have fellowship with them.¹⁵⁵⁸⁾ Disobedience to the divine commandment forbidding Christians to fellowship with false teachers and false doctrines is called in church parlance "unionism," "religious mongering," "syncretism," and so on.¹⁵⁵⁹⁾ Unionism is actually the cause of the existence of divisions and heterodox churches in Christendom in the first place. If all Christians had kept to the divine order of shunning those who teach differently (ετεροδιδασκαλοντες), neither the Papacy nor other sects would have arisen. Where there are no buyers, there is no market. Unionism, to be sure, pretends to want to eliminate disunity within Christendom. But because the unity of the Christian church is a unity of faith and confession, it is a caricature of Christian unity, indeed a mockery of it.¹⁵⁶⁰⁾ Instead of healing the damage, he declares it in permanence. An exact description of the Christian unity we have 1 Cor. 1:10: "I exhort you

1557) Rom. 16:17; 1 Tim. 6:3 ff.; 2 Joh. 10. 11 etc.

1558) Deut. 13:3; 8:2; 1 Cor. 11:19.

1559) Baier III, 665 sqq; Apol. 162, 48.

1560) Cf. Luther on the unity of the Christian church as a unity of hearts through faith in the Word of God, St. L. XIX, 344 ff.

but, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak one thing (ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες), and let there be no divisions among you." Here agreement in address (λέγειν) or confession of Christian doctrine is required. And when the apostle continues, "But hold fast one to another in one mind and in one opinion (εν τῷ αὐτῷ νοί καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ γνώμῃ)," it is clearly expressed that Christians are to understand the same words in the same sense.¹⁵⁶¹⁾ Agreement in the same words in different senses is the very opposite of the unanimity wrought by God, and if such unanimity is sought, it is gambling indecent to Christians in holy, divine things.¹⁵⁶²⁾ The Christian church can and should be patient with the erring and seek to remove error through instruction. But it can and should never grant error a right alongside truth. If it does so, it is always a denial of the truth itself. Truth has it in itself that it excludes the opposing error. Truth, which no longer excludes error from itself, but grants it the right to exist beside itself, gives itself up *eo ipso* as truth. Luther's words belong here, such as these:¹⁵⁶³⁾ "He who holds his doctrine, faith, and confession to be true, right, and certain cannot stand in the same stall with others who lead false doctrines or are devoted to them." This is why the unionism of the Christian church is so dangerous, because it abolishes in principle the difference between truth and error, and it can happen only as a result of a "happy inconsistency" that he who makes fellowship with error nevertheless remains for his person essentially on the ground of truth. For it is indeed a "happy inconsistency" if someone, although he accepts those words of Scripture which teach the difference between the truth and the error of those who teach it

1561) Meyer on this passage: is nowhere in the New Testament called *Gesinnung*, but *sententia, iudicium*."

1562) Cf. Luther XVIII, 1996: "Fabius teaches that an ambiguous word should be avoided like a cliff, and if such a thing should happen to us, it can be forgiven; but to seek it with diligence and resolution is not worthy of forgiveness, but of the most justified hatred of all. ... For if one were to get into the habit of speaking doubtfully and cunningly in religion, in law, and in all important matters, what would become of it but a completely confused Babel, so that in the end no one could understand the other?"

1563) St. L. XVII, 1180.

but still holds fast to the words: "The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, makes us clean from all sin."¹⁵⁶⁴ — As for the address that is found in our time even among so-called positive theologians, that "different trends", that is, disagreement in doctrine and confession, are intended by God, one can only wonder that such address is heard in the face of the contrary testimony of Scripture within Christendom.

6. Schism. (Separatism) ^

By the church term schism we mean a church separation that is not commanded by the Word of God, but is brought about according to one's own choosing, i.e. sinfully, e.g. because of differences in church customs, ways of speaking, orders, etc. Practically important is the distinction between malicious schismatics and those who, out of weakness in knowledge and out of a preconceived opinion, cause a sinful separation.¹⁵⁶⁵ However, those who separate themselves from a church fellowship because of stubbornly held false doctrines are wrongly called schismatics, separatists, etc. This separation is commanded in Scripture (Rom. 16:17) and is the only means to establish and maintain the right unity in the Christian church.

7. Representation of the Christian church. ^ (*Ecclesia repraesentativa*)

Christ did not appoint a single person (pope, secular princes, provincial presidents, etc.) nor a college of persons (bishops, pastors, consistories, parliaments, conferences, synods, councils, etc.) who should or could decide and order ecclesiastical matters in a conscience-binding way for the Church. That

1564) Cf. Luther [XX, 1781 f.](#)

1565) J. Meisner: *Schismatici alii sunt malitiosi, qui scienter et volenter contra conscientiam ex malitia ecclesiam turbant eandemque in duas partes dissentientes a se invicem dividunt; alii non malitiosi, qui ex infirmitate, ignorantia et praeconcepta opinione, quam pro verissima habent, hoc faciunt. Illi de ecclesia non sunt, quia malitiosa eiusmodi scissura maximum est peccatum, omnem extirpans fidem. ... Hi de ecclesia utique sunt, quia talis ex ignorantia orta et facta turbatio non statim excutit fidem; quod tum demum fit, quando malitiosa accedit defensio.* [[Google](#)] (*Disput. de eccl. a. 1651 habita, th. 3, qu. 4; in Baier III, 664.*)

the Papacy claims to be the supreme conscience-binding representation and summary of the whole church is one of the characteristics by which the Papacy is recognized as the Antichrist prophesied in Scripture. When the secular authorities, whether monarchical or democratic or otherwise, ascribe to themselves a *ius circa sacra* or *in sacra*, this is caesareopapism. In general, if a college of persons, whether composed of ecclesiastical or secular persons or a mixture of both, is granted the power to make decisions or orders binding on certain consciences, this is not Christian, but Papist, or caesareopapist, because in the Christian Church God's Word is the only authority and all Christians are and remain directly responsible to God for everything they believe and do. Admittedly, in order to take care of certain matters, the church may be represented by persons elected by it to do so. Thus, church elders (overseers, presbyteries) may represent a local church, and conferences, synods, councils, etc., may represent other Christians and a small or larger number of local churches. But if we ask about the authority or power of these *ecclesiae repraesentativae*, it must be said that they always have only advisory power toward individual Christians and congregations. In the "Synodal Manual" of the Missouri Synod, ch. IV, in regard to the relationship of the synod to the local congregations, it is said, "The synod is only an advisory body in regard to the self-government of the individual congregations. Therefore, no decision of the former, if it imposes something on the individual congregation as a synodal decision, has binding force for the latter. Such a synodal resolution can have binding force only when the individual congregation has voluntarily accepted it by a formal congregational resolution or has confirmed it itself. If a congregation finds the resolution not in accordance with the Word of God or unsuitable for its relationship, it has the right to disregard and, respectively, reject the resolution." The factual situation within the Christian church is this: If it is a matter of things taught and decided in the Word of God, it is Christian not to make any man or number of men, however learned and respected, arbiters of what is scriptural doctrine. Every individual Christian must decide this for himself on the basis of the clear, infallible Word of God.

Luther remarks ([IX, 1236 f.](#)) on 1 Pet. 3:15 "Be ready always to give an answer to every man"): "St. Peter spoke these words to all Christians: priests, laymen, men, women, young, old, and of whatever rank they are; therefore it follows that every Christian should know the reason and cause of his faith and be able to give cause and answer where it is necessary. Now, so far laymen have been forbidden to read the Bible. Then the devil made a pretty grab, that he might tear people away from the Scriptures, and thus thought: If I make the laity not read the Scriptures, I will then bring the priests away from the Bible in *Aristotelem*, that they may wash what they will; so the laity must hear what they preach to them. Otherwise, if the laity read the Scriptures, the priests would also have to study, so that they would not be rebuked and overcome" (by the laity from the Scriptures). But you see how here St. Peter says to all of us that we should give an answer and show the reason for our faith. If you die, I will not be with you, nor the Pope; if you do not know the reason for your hope and say: I believe as the councils, the Pope and our fathers believed, the devil will answer: Yes, but, if they were wrong? then he has won and will drag you into hell. Therefore, we must know what we believe, namely, what is the Word of God, not what the Pope or councils put or say. For you must by no means trust in men, but in the mere Word of God."¹⁵⁶⁶ Luther further writes ([X, 1540](#)): "The word and doctrine of men have established and decreed that one should leave the judgment of doctrine only to the bishops and scholars and to the councils; what they decide, all the world should regard as law and articles of faith. ... Christ sets the contradiction equal, takes away both the right and the power to judge the doctrine from the bishops, scholars and councils, and gives it to everyone and all Christians in general, when he says Joh. 10:4: 'My sheep know my voice'; again v. 5: 'My sheep do not follow the strangers, but flee from them, for they do not know the

1566) Luther here, as throughout, insists on the bare Scripture, *nuda Scriptura*, in contrast to the Scripture interpreted or commented by men, because the "bare" Scripture is in every case clearer than the exegesis or exposition, and the Christian must in every case judge by the "bare" Scripture whether the exegesis or exposition is correct. This Luther takes at length on Ps. 37, [St. L. V, 334 ff.](#)

stranger's voice.' Here you see clearly whose right it is to judge the doctrines. Bishops, pope, scholars and everyone has power to teach, but the sheep shall judge whether they teach Christ's voice or the voice of the stranger. ... Therefore we let bishops and councils decide and set what they will; but where we have the Word of God before us, it shall stand with us, and not with them, whether it be right or wrong, and they shall yield to us and obey our word." — Furthermore, concerning the things which are neither commanded nor forbidden in the Word of God (adiaphora), even in this Christians are not to accept a conscience-binding commandment from other men, be they individuals or a smaller or larger number of the same. This would be against Matt. 23:8; 1 Cor. 7:23 etc. Adiaphora are not ordered among Christians by commandment, but by way of mutual agreement (*per mutuum consensum*) according to love. Here it may be pointed out that votes taken in assemblies of orthodox churches have a different meaning depending on whether they concern Christian doctrines or indifferent things. Votes in matters of doctrine have only the purpose of ascertaining whether all have recognized and agree with the doctrine of the divine word; they do not have the purpose of deciding on the correctness of a doctrine by majority vote or even by unanimity. The orthodox Christian Church remains aware that it cannot make or give birth to Christian doctrines by decision, but can only ever present and confess the doctrines already present and decided in Scripture to the error that has arisen from Scripture. Axiom: *Decreta concilii articulos fidei neque condunt neque in auctoritate constituunt, sed, si orthodoxa sunt concilia, articulos fidei in Scriptura iam traditos contra errores insurgentes profitentur*. What is true of councils is true of all small or large church assemblies. — In indifferent things, votes are taken to find out what the majority considers most appropriate. The natural order is that in indifferent things the minority sends itself to the majority, not because the majority demands something, but for the sake of love. Because love is the queen here, the majority also sends itself into the minority under certain circumstances.¹⁵⁶⁷⁾ Christians, insofar as they are Christians, never come into dispute about indifferent things, because among them, insofar as they are Christians and

¹⁵⁶⁷⁾ For details, see Walther, *Pastorale*, p. 372 ff.

walk according to the Spirit, "no one desires to be another's superior, but each wants to be another's inferior," as Luther puts it.¹⁵⁶⁸⁾ If a dispute arises in indifferent things, it is a sign that the mood in the assembly threatens to sink below the Christian level. Therefore, the proceedings about the indifferent things in question should be interrupted and the Christian level restored through instruction and admonition, for example on the basis of 1 Pet. 6:6. Luther's theses (*propositiones*) about the power of the church in articles of doctrine and indifferent things are well known. He says:¹⁵⁶⁹⁾ "The Christian church has no power to set any article of faith, never has, never will. The Church of God has no power to set any precept of good works, as it never has, nor ever will. All the articles of faith are sufficiently set forth in the Holy Scriptures, so that there is no need to set any besides. All the commandments of good works are sufficiently set forth in Holy Scriptures, so that it is not necessary to set any in addition. The Church of God has no power to confirm articles [of faith] or commandments [of good works] or the Holy Scriptures, as if it did so by higher power or by judicial power, never has, never will. The Church of God, on the contrary, is confirmed and approved by the Holy Scriptures or the Articles of Faith as by the Supreme Lord and Judge. The Church of God confirms the Articles of Faith or the Holy Scriptures as a subject, that is, she recognizes and confesses them as a servant does the seal of his Lord. For the sentence stands firm: he who has not power to promise and give the life to come and the life in time, cannot set articles of faith. The church of God has power to ordain usages in feasts, foods, fasts, prayers, watches, etc., but not over others, only over itself; nor has it ever done otherwise, nor will it do otherwise. But a church is a number or collection of baptized and faithful under one pastor, whether of a city or of a whole country or of the whole world. This pastor or prelate has nothing to set, because he is not the church, unless his church gives its consent."

1568) Of secular authorities, how far one owes obedience to them. St. L. X, 406.

1569) Opp. v. a.. IV, 373 sqq. St. L. XIX, 958.

A part of the Reformed church fellowships of America is also infected with the Roman spirit in that they ascribe to themselves the power of making laws and ordinances binding upon certain things to general church assemblies, such as synods and councils. It is true that they generally say that the church may not establish what is contrary to the Word of God; for example, the Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, etc. But the same fellowships do it roughly in the order of things not commanded in the Word of God. In these things they ascribe to their general church assemblies the power to make ordinances to which Christians are subject for the sake of conscience. For example, in the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterians, chap. XXXI: "It belongeth to synods and councils ministerially to determine controversies of faith and cases of conscience; to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God and government of His Church; to receive complaints in cases of maladministrations, and authoritatively to determine the same: which decrees and determinations, if consonant to the Word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission, *not only for their agreement with the Word, but also for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God, appointed thereunto in His Word.*"¹⁵⁷⁰⁾ But this Roman leaven has also penetrated into Lutheran fellowships of America and Germany.¹⁵⁷¹⁾ They teach a church government appointed by God in addition to the office of the Word of God, which can make *iure divino* ordinances to which the congregations must be subject. Of course, they also add the restriction that the church government must not prescribe anything that is contrary to the Word of God. But this is a contradiction in itself. It is already against the Word of God to command Christians something that God has not commanded in His Word. The fourth commandment was invoked. Parents could command their children things not commanded in God's Word, if only these things were not contrary to God's Word. Now, however, pastors and other church superiors belonged to the spiritual fathers. Therefore, by virtue of divine order, obedience is owed to them in all things that are not

1570) Cf. the quotations in Günther, Symbolik, § 154-157. [Cf. *Popular Symbolics*, pp. 240, 241, 243, 288.] Furthermore F. Pastor, lecture on "Church and Church Government," Delegate Synod 1896, p. 27 ff. [English ed. pg 432, note 42.]

1571) Cf. the quotations in Große, Unterscheidungslehren, p. 8. L. u. W. 1870, p. 184 f.

commanded in the Word of God, if only they are not forbidden in the Word of God. This argument has confused some. Against this it is to be said: Parents can, however, give their children commands that go beyond God's Word, because they are endowed by God with legislative power toward their children, Col. 3:20: "Little children, be obedient to parents in all things!" But the church, or individuals in the church, God has not endowed with legislative power, but here it is said, "One is your Master, Christ; but you are all brethren." Whoever wants to command in the church beyond Christ's commandment is thereby encroaching on Christ's governance and touching Christ's majesty. Christ has acquired the church for himself with his blood, so that he is its only Lord and ruler. Whoever now wants to command the church apart from Christ, whether this be much or little, thus intrudes on Christ's position as Savior and ruler. He also touches the glory of the Christians, with which their Savior has crowned them. All who, through faith in Christ, have obtained forgiveness of sins and sonship of God, have thereby also obtained the privilege of being subject in all spiritual matters only to Christ and His Word, and of being freed from all the ordinances of men. This is the glorious liberty of the children of God, purchased for them not with gold or silver, but with the dear blood of Christ, and given to them in justification. If now men claim the right to govern Christians with their (men's) commandments, they thereby turn God's free children into servants of men and actually expect them to fall away from Christ as their one Lord and Master. Therefore Luther says ([XX, 207](#)): "Dear, let it not be a small thing to you, to forbid where God does not forbid, to break Christian freedom which Christ's blood has tasted, to burden consciences with sin where there is none. He who does this and may do this, may also do all evil, yes, he already denies thereby all that God is, teaches and does, together with his Christ."

Synods with only consultative power have been ridiculed. It has been said that "confusion" and "disorder" would ensue if synods were not given the power to establish conscience-binding orders beyond the Word of God. That this is a groundless fear has been proven in America by the example of the Lutheran synods, which leave consciences completely free with regard to synodical orders. We

so-called Missourians have enjoyed, as far as peace and order are concerned, probably the quietest time the church has ever enjoyed. We may say that the government of the church by the Word of God alone has proved itself in seventy years of practice among us. Admittedly, the flesh of Christians has also wanted to cause disorder among us. But God's Word has revealed its governing, all-controlling power. The free governance, which renounces all territories beyond God's Word of God, has bound us and held us together so firmly that those who are far away thought that we had a "high church" governance and that we were the "church party" in the Lutheran church.

A few more points related to the "ecclesia repraesentativa" are the following: 1. The calling of church assemblies within a congregation or within a conference, synod, etc. stands, of course, first of all with those who have already been commissioned with it by the congregation or an association of congregations. This, however, does not exclude the right of every Christian to call a congregational assembly, Synod convention, council, etc., if circumstances require it and those charged with the calling seem to be in default.¹⁵⁷²⁾ 2. Church meetings shall be presided over by those who have been appointed to preside over them by a previously established order or who are elected to preside over them by the assembly. With regard to the presidency of the board of the local congregation, Walther says:¹⁵⁷³⁾ "The pastor of the congregation is to open the meetings with a prayer and, because he bears the office of the Word, which is authoritative for all offices, it is proper for him to preside. As Luther writes: The office of preaching the Gospel is the highest of all, for it is the right apostolic office, which lays the foundation for all other offices, to which all belong, to be built upon the first," (X, 1592.) However, here too the pastor should not insist on the chair in absolute terms. More about this in the next section on congregational meetings." Walther gives excellent hints on what the presiding preacher should pay attention to in a congregational meeting, so that everything is done honestly and properly and the Christian character of the meeting is preserved.¹⁵⁷⁴⁾ The nine points listed by Walther also contain the essentials for the

1572) Cf. Luther X, 278 ff.

1573) *Pastorale*, p. 364.

1574) *Pastorale*, p. 372. [They are reproduced by Fritz, *Pastoral Theology*, p. 316 f]

presiding over major church assemblies (conferences, synods, councils). The manuals on "parliamentary order" mostly provide the natural order that should be followed in all deliberative assemblies. However, care should be taken, both by the presider and by the whole assembly, that the formal application of "parliamentary rules" in the church does not restrict free debate and violate charity toward those who are less versed in parliamentary rules. 3. It should be self-evident in the Christian Church that the so-called laity also have a seat and a voice in Synod conventions. This is a truth that has also been held by later Lutheran theologians and under state-church relationships. Thus Quenstedt says: "Assessors and competent judges, besides the presiding bishop, are not only the bishops, but also faithful Christians, knowledgeable of the Scriptures, both lay and clerical, sent by the congregations to the council." ¹⁵⁷⁵⁾ The doctrine, which unfortunately has become loud even within the Lutheran Church, that in doctrinal proceedings the laity should be allowed to listen and ask questions, but not to judge and pass sentence, is the naked papist abomination. ¹⁵⁷⁶⁾ All who advocate this doctrine prove *eo ipso* that they have lost understanding and judgment with respect to the Christian state and the Christian church. — If Quenstedt, in addition to the words just quoted, remarks in a note that all Christian "estates," namely, besides the public teachers, also persons in authority (politici) and laymen, are assessors and competent judges in councils, this requires a remark. The so-called doctrine of estates was originally well-intentioned. It was meant to express to the Papacy the truth that judgment in the Church stood not with individual privileged persons but with the whole, with Christians of all estates. But the doctrine of estates can be misunderstood as if the secular estates ("nourishing estate" and "defense estate") stood as such in the church. Now it is true that through the Holy Spirit's work of grace

 1575) *Systema II, 1627: Assessores et iudices competentes praeter praesidem sunt non tantum episcopi, sed quivis fideles literarum sacrarum periti, tam laici quam clerici, ad concilium ab ecclesiis missi.* [[Google](#)]

1576) Luther expresses himself crudely about this abomination ([XIX, 341](#)): "To know and to judge about the doctrine belongs to all and every Christian, and that in such a way that he is cursed who offends such right by a hairbreadth."

people from all kinds of estates (fathers and mothers of households, employers and workers, masters and servants, country fathers and civilians, etc.) are faithful and thus in the church. But they stand in the church, not as such estates, but as believers.¹⁵⁷⁷⁾ Even the administrators of the public ministry of preaching ("doctrinal state") are not in the Church as a "state" distinct from the Christian state and endowed with special powers, but they are, by the calling of Christians, servants of Christians for the public administration of the means of grace, which have all power and efficacy in themselves and not first through the person or "state" of the servants.¹⁵⁷⁸⁾ — In discussing the *ecclesia repraesentativa*, it is also appropriate to remember that the learned theologians who are present at synods, for example, must use language and expressions that are understood by all those present. The use of a scholarly language that is understandable only to specialists does not correspond to the purpose of our synods and is in fact a kind of insult to the assembly. Luther's saying is well known that theologians, when they are among themselves, may speak so learnedly that even God in heaven is amazed at it, but when they speak before the people, they are obliged to use a form of expression that Hans and Grete understand.


The Public Ministry. [^] (*De ministerio ecclesiastico*)

1. The concept of public ministry. [^]

The word "ministry" is taken both in Scripture and in church usage in a general sense and in a special or narrower sense. Taken in the general sense, it denotes every way of preaching the gospel or administering the means of grace, whether it is done by all Christians to whom the gospel or the means of grace are originally and directly given and besought, or by

1577) Gal. 3:28.

1578) Cf. [L. u. W. 1856, p. 289](#) ff.: "The difference in status in the church"; [1857, p. 234](#) ff.: "Whether it is in accordance with the gospel to take the governance of the Lutheran church in this country, as of every single congregation, into the hands of the so-called three estates, namely the doctrines, the defense and the nourishment."

chosen public ministers (*ministri ecclesiae*) on behalf of Christians.. We understand here by the public ministry of preaching the ministry in the narrower sense, namely the ministry through which the means of grace originally and inalienably entrusted to Christians are administered on behalf of Christians, that is, by reason of fellowship. The ministry in this sense always presupposes the existence of Christian congregations. Only where there is a congregation beforehand can the public ministry of preaching be established by it. Smalc. Art., p. 341 [*Trigl.* 523, 67 church is, there is ever the command to preach the gospel. Therefore the churches" (the local churches are meant) "must retain the power to demand, elect, and ordain ministers." So also the Scriptures. Only after congregations had arisen in Crete through missionary activity does Paul commission Titus (Tit. 1:5) to appoint elders (πρεσβυτέρους) city by city (κατά πόλιν, that is, in the cities where congregations were), whom he also calls bishops (ἐπίσκοποι) v. 7. Further: to the congregations which had sprung up in Asia Minor on the first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas on the return journey appointed congregational (κατ' ἐκκλησίαν that is, where there were congregations) elders (πρεσβυτέρους). That the public ministry presupposes the existence of congregations is further evident from the fact that Scripture mentions congregations as a whole and each individual member of them as the object of the activity of this ministry. Thus 1 Tim. 3:5: provide for the congregation of God (τῆς ἐκκλησίας τον θεον ἐπιμελεῖσθαι), Acts 20:28: take care of the whole flock (προσέχειν παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ), V, 28b: feed the congregation of God (ποιμαίνειν την ἐκκλησίαν τον θεον, V. 31: admonish any one (νον&ετειν ένα έκαστον), 1 Pet. 5:3: be examples to the flock (τύποι γινόμενοι τον ποιμνίον). "Public," therefore, is the name given to this office and to the functions of the same, not from the place where they take place, but in the sense of: on behalf of and in the service of the congregation and to the congregation, just as in civil life we speak of public officials and of public service (public servants, public service) in those who stand in the service of a commonwealth. Therefore, the functions of the public ministry are "public," not only when its ministers preach the Word to a whole congregation, but also when they minister to individual souls in private pastoral care. Where no

Christian congregations are, as in a heathen lands, there is also no office of fellowship. But as soon as a congregation has come into being through missionary activity, the situation is also created whereby the ministry of public preaching comes into being. After Luther has explained that a special calling belongs to the public doctrines among Christians, he continues:¹⁵⁷⁹⁾ "This is the calling of a public office among Christians. But if one were to come among the crowd, where there were no Christians, one would want to do as the apostles did and not wait for the calling (for there [namely, where there are still no Christians] one does not have the office of preaching), and one would say, 'All here are not Christians, I will preach and teach them about Christianity,' and a crowd would gather, choose and appoint me as their bishop, then I would have a calling."

2. The relationship of the public ministry to the spiritual priesthood of all Christians. [^](#)

All Christians, that is, all men who have become faithful in Christ, have the spiritual priesthood and thus the calling to preach the Gospel. In the words of 1 Pet. 2:9: "You are the royal priesthood (βασιλειον ἱεράτευμα). ... that you should proclaim the virtues of him who called you from darkness to his marvelous light" is addressed not to elders or bishops, but to all Christians. The ministry, of course, presupposes the spiritual priesthood inasmuch as it is God's will and order that the elders or bishops be taken not from among the unbelievers but from among the believers or spiritual priests. This is clear from the list of qualities that are to be found in an elder or bishop. All the positive qualities (doctrinal, mild, etc.) and negative qualities (not vicious, not stingy, etc.) mentioned in the lists of 1 Tim. 3 and Tit. 1 have personal faith in Christ as a prerequisite. Nevertheless, the Scripture sharply distinguishes between the spiritual priesthood and the public ministry. This is clear from the fact that, in addition to the teaching ability that every Christian possesses,¹⁵⁸⁰⁾ it demands a special teaching ability and, in addition to the calling

1579) [St. L. III, 723](#).

1580) Joh. 6:45; 7:38-39; 1 Cor. 2:15-16; 1 Joh. 2:27 etc.

of the spiritual priesthood to preach the word,¹⁵⁸¹⁾ a special calling. A congregation would be acting contrary to God's order if it wanted to determine the ministers of the public ministry by lot or according to the alphabet or similar criteria and thereby invoke the fact that all Christians are spiritual priests, capable of teaching and driven by the Holy Spirit. Rather, the Scripture warns 1 Tim. 5:22: "Let no one lay hands on you soon!"¹⁵⁸²⁾ and calls for the elders or bishops to be appointed according to the qualities that they specifically name as necessary for the direction of the ministry (1 Tim. 3:17; Tit. 1:6-12). Luther: "How" (that is, how they are constituted) "the bishops and shepherds who are to be elected are sufficiently taught by Paul Tit. 1:5 f. and 1 Tim. 3:2 f." ¹⁵⁸³⁾

It is well known how powerfully Luther sets forth the rights, abilities and duties of the spiritual priesthood on the one hand, but on the other hand sharply separates the general priesthood and the public ministry. With regard to the spiritual priesthood, he says:¹⁵⁸⁴⁾ "If we have become Christians through this priest and his priesthood" (namely, through Christ) "and have been incorporated into him through faith in baptism, then we also have the right and authority to teach and confess the word we received from him before everyone, each according to his calling and standing. For though we are not all in public office and calling, yet every Christian shall and may teach, instruct, admonish, comfort, rebuke his neighbor by the Word of God, when and where anyone needs it; as father and mother their children and servants, one brother, neighbor, citizen, or farmer another. For a Christian can instruct or admonish another of the Ten Commandments, faith, prayer, etc., who is still ignorant or weak, and he who hears it is obliged to accept it from him as the Word of God

1581) 1 Pet. 2:9; Is. 40:9, Col. 3:16. Moses's wish, Num. 11:29: "Would God that all the Lord's people prophesied and that the Lord would give His Spirit over them!" is fulfilled in the New Testament, as Acts 2 is reported.

1582) Even if one understands this laying on of hands quite generally as "giving the blessing in various extraordinary cases" (Huther), surely the laying on of hands in the appointment of the presbyterate is also meant. In any case, the relation of the laying on of hands specifically to the readmission of the excommunicated (de Wette, Wiesinger) is to be described as a mere conceit, since this custom is not mentioned in the New Testament, but the laying on of hands at the appointment for the ministry of the congregation is (Acts 6:6).

1583) St. L. X, 1598. 1584) On Ps. 110:4. St. L. V, 1038.

and to confess it publicly." Luther also points out that the means of grace are the same in nature, power, and effect whether they are administered by all Christians or by ministers in public office. He writes (X, 1590): "We firmly insist that there is no other Word of God than that alone which all Christians are commanded to preach; that there is no other baptism than that which all Christians may give; that there is no other memorial of the Lord's supper than that which every Christian may commit; Nor is there any other sin than that which every Christian may bind and loose; again, that there is no sacrifice but the body of every Christian man; that no one can or may pray but the Christian alone; also that no one should judge the doctrines but the Christian alone. But these are respectively the priestly and royal offices." On the other hand, Luther emphasizes the difference between the priesthood of all Christians and the public doctrine (V, 1037): "Although we are all priests, we cannot and should not all preach or teach and govern. But out of the whole multitude some must be separated and chosen, to whom such an office may be given; and he who has such an office is not a priest for the sake of the office (as the others all are), but a servant of the others of all. And if he can or will no longer preach or serve, he rejoins the common multitude, commands the office to another, and is nothing else than any common Christian. Behold, the Ministry must be separated from the common priesthood of all baptized Christians. For such an office is no more than a public office, such as is commanded to one by the whole congregation, all of whom are priests at the same time." In further justification of the necessity of a special calling for the administration of the public ministry, Luther says (X, 1589): "Because all things should be common to all Christians, which we have hitherto told, which we have also preserved and proved, it is not due to one who would set himself apart and appropriate to him alone that which is ours alone. Refrain from this right and also take it to custom, unless there is another who has also received such a right. But this requires the right of the fellowship, that one, or as many as please the congregation, be chosen and excepted, who in place of and on behalf of all those who have the same right, publicly exercise these offices, lest an abominable disorder take place among the people of God, and the church become


a Babylon, in which all things should be honorable and orderly, as the apostle taught 1 Cor. 14:40. It is two different things for one to execute a common right by command of the congregation, or for one to use the same right in time of need. In a congregation, where every man's right is free, let no man take it up without the will and choice of the whole congregation; but in time of need let every man take it up whomsoever he will."

3. The public ministry is not a human order, but a divine one. [^]

It is not merely human, but divine order that Christians carry out the works of the spiritual priesthood, that is, preach the gospel not only in their homes, but also in their intercourse with their brethren and with the world. But it is also not merely human but divine order that Christians living in one place enter into fellowship with one another, form a congregation, and appoint persons equipped with special teaching ability to preach the Word of God publicly (in public assembly) and specially (to individual Christians) on their behalf. As far as the scriptural evidence for this is concerned, we not only see that the apostles appointed elders or bishops to the established congregations, whose office it was to supply the congregations publicly and especially with the Word of God, but it is also expressly reported that Paul, when this order was omitted in the congregations on Crete, commands Titus, who was left there, to appoint such elders or bishops in the individual congregations. Tit. 1:5: "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest perfect, as I left it, and appoint elders in the cities hither and thither, as I commanded thee." τούτον χάριν ἀπέλιπόν σε εν Κρήτη, ἵνα τὰ λείποντα επιδιορθώση καὶ καταστήσης κατὰ πόλιν πρεσβυτέρους ὡς ἐγὼ σοι διέταξα μὴν. "Elders" and "bishops" are one and the same in Scripture because the expressions *promiscue* are used.¹⁵⁸⁵⁾ These elders or bishops are accurately described in Scripture both according to their personal character and according to the functions incumbent upon them. They must not only be Christians but model Christians, examples of the flock (1 Pet. 5:3), also have a good name before the world (1 Tim. 3:7). The

1585) Tit. 1:5, 7; Acts 20:17, 28.

virtues that should be found in them and the vices that should not be found in them are listed in 1 Tim. 3 and Tit. 1. As far as their knowledge of Christian doctrine and their ability to teach are concerned, they must have the "sound" doctrine, that is, pure doctrine, and be able to do both the thesis and the antithesis, that is, to teach the congregation rightly and to refute false teachers (Titus 1:9-11). For a further description of the area of their activity and the activity itself it says: They must not only preside well over their own house, but also care for the congregation of God (1 Tim. 3:5), feed the congregation of God (Acts 20:28), feed the flock they are commanded to feed (1 Pet. 5:1 ff.), take care of the whole flock (Acts 20:28), care for the individual souls (Acts 20:31), watch over the souls as those who are to give account for them (Hebr. 13:17).

It has been objected against the divine order of the ministry, e.g. by Höfling, that what Paul and Barnabas did Acts 14:23 and Paul Tit. 1:5 ff. had only temporary and local validity, namely for initial conditions and "just formed congregations" of the apostolic church. But this is a limitation not contained in the text. In the text the appointment of elders or bishops is not justified by the fact that they were initial congregations or "congregations that had just come into existence," but the congregations are described absolutely as congregations in which the elders or bishops were to be stewards of God (θεοῦ οἰκονόμοι). Moreover, initial congregations or congregations that have just come into existence are also proper congregations. A congregation is a congregation by the fact that it exists, even before the appointment of the public Ministry. Thus it does not suit us to limit the order of presbyters or bishops to temporary and local relationships of apostolic times. We are safe without any doubt when we say with the Lutheran Confessions [[Trigl. 523](#), [Smalc. Art.](#), [ibid.](#), 67 church is" — no matter how old, how large, in what place and at what time it is — "there is ever the command to preach the gospel. Therefore the churches must retain the power to require ministers, to hold elections, and to ordain." We say, therefore, in describing the public ministry: it does not stand in the arbitrariness of Christians whether they want to establish and maintain the public ministry or not, but Christians are bound to do so by God's ordinance

Walther expresses this thus:¹⁵⁸⁶⁾ "The ministry of preaching or parish office is not a human order, but an office instituted by God Himself" and: "The ministry of preaching is not an arbitrary office, but such an office, the direction of which is commanded to the church, and to which the church is ordinarily bound until the end of days." The Lutheran Confession states:¹⁵⁸⁷⁾ "But if one would call the sacrament of the order a sacrament of the ministry and gospel, there would be no difficulty in calling ordination a sacrament. For the ministry has been instituted and commanded by God (*ministerium Verbi habet mandatum Dei*)."

The divine order of the public ministry was disputed within the Lutheran Church in the middle of the last century, especially in Germany, with little satisfactory result. Only a few, such as Ströbel,¹⁵⁸⁸⁾ took the right scriptural position between two paths. The theologian Höfling of Erlangen wants the ministry to be a divine order, but only in the sense that "everything reasonable, expedient, morally necessary" can be called a divine order, not in the sense that there is a divine commandment for the public ministry. With Acts 14:23, where Paul and Barnabas ordain elders for the congregations they have gathered, and with Titus 1:5, where Paul commands Titus to appoint elders or bishops in the congregations of Crete, Höfling, as we have already seen, comes to terms with the untenable remark that these passages deal with "congregations that have just come into being", with "relationships of the beginning", from which "no dogmatic conclusions may be drawn for the future".¹⁵⁸⁹⁾ The real reason, however,

1586) *Kirche u. Amt*, [193](#), [211](#). [[Walther and the Church](#), p. 71, [73](#)]

1587) *Apology*, 203, 11. [[Trigl. 311, Art. XIII, 11](#) [🔗](#)]

1588) *Publication for Lutheran Theology and Church* 1852, p. 699 f.

1589) Höfling presented his doctrines in "[Grundsätze ev.-luth. Kirchenverfassung](#)". The text is also printed in full in the "Erl. Zeitschr. 1850, p. 317 ff. The third edition appeared in 1853. Höfling's position is perhaps best recognized in his article directed against Münchmeyer, "Erl. Zeitschr. 1852, p. 102 ff. There is no factual difference between the 1st and 3rd editions of Höfling's writing. In the 3rd edition, too, he says ([pp. 75, 76](#)) that the spiritual ministry in and for itself, but not the public ministry of preaching established by reason of fellowship, is of divine institution, but belongs, "even if with inner necessity," to the human order of church and worship. [On p. 274](#) it is repeated that the apostles had no divine command for the appointment of presbyters or bishops; p. 278 the

why he thinks he must reject the divine order of the Ministry lies elsewhere with Höfling. He thinks that if one assumes a divine commandment for the administration of the means of grace by public ministers, then an Old Testament, legal, ceremonial-legal trait is thereby brought into the church of the New Testament. This argument refutes itself as soon as it is taken seriously. It proves too much. Nor is there merely an "inner moral necessity" for the handling of the Word of God on the part of all Christians by virtue of their spiritual priesthood, but likewise an express divine command. All Christians are to search the Scriptures, are to read the Scriptures, are to let Christ's Word dwell among them, are to proclaim the virtues of God, etc. We are dealing here also with imperatives or command words:, that is, with divine order in the sense of a divine command. If a "ceremonial-legal trait" were attached to the divine command or commandment, we would also have to deny the divine order of the handling of the means of grace on the part of all Christians, in order to protect them from ceremonial-legal deviations. Furthermore: For baptism and for the Lord's Supper there is also not merely an "inner moral necessity," but an express divine command. But we will not therefore maintain that baptism and the Lord's Supper have a "legal trait" attached to them, and therefore deny with newer theologians the command for baptism and the Lord's Supper.¹⁵⁹⁰ Furthermore, with regard to sanctification and good works, the doctrine teaches the

The "appointment to office" — and in it the establishment of the public ministry of the fellowship is included — is put on the same line with the Sunday celebration. — The literature belonging to this dispute is very extensive: Delitzsch, *Vier Bücher v. d. K.*, 1847. Loehe, *Aphorismen*, 1849. Harleß, *K. u. A.*, 1853. Wucherer, *Ausführl.* Kliefoth, *Acht Bücher v. d. K.*, 1854. Münchmeyer, *Das Amt d. N. Ts.*; Zeitschr. für luth. Th. u. K. 1852, p. 46 ff. The same: *Das Dogma v. d. sichtb. u. unsichtb. Flörke*, Zur L. v. d. K. u. ihrem A.; Zeitschr. für luth. Th. u. K. 1852, p. 1 ff. Preger, *Die Geschichte d. L. vom geistl. A.*, 1857 (excellent compilation of quotations from Loehe, p. 170 to 192. Criticism of Loehe's position p. 192 ff, Kliefoth's p. 216 ff). Kraußbold, *Amt u. Gemeinde*, 1858. Dieckhoff, *Luther's L. v. d. kirchl. power*, 1865. Vilmar, *Erl. Zeitschr.*, Sept. 1859. same: *Die L. vom geistl. Amt*, 1870.

1590) This, however, is done by more recent theologians, as we have seen with the doctrines of baptism and the Lord's Supper. They admit that baptism and the Lord's Supper were in use in the apostolic church, but not by divine institution, but as a result of free development from Jewish and pagan analogies.

Scripture not only the "inner moral necessity," but also the divine order expressed by command.¹⁵⁹¹⁾ We will not, however, maintain that Scripture with these commands instructs Christians to a ceremonial-legal conception of sanctification and good works. In short, Höfling makes contrasts where there are none. The divine command and the divine order to do something has no "legal trait," as Höfling thinks. In his case, of course, this is connected with the peculiarity of Erlangen theology. He explicitly refers to the consensus of all his colleagues¹⁵⁹²⁾ and especially to the proof of Scripture that Hofmann had given for his (Höfling's) doctrines.¹⁵⁹³⁾ Hofmann's theological position is this: He believes that in presenting Christian doctrine, one must first put Holy Scriptures out of sight and let the "reborn" ego or subject testify "independently." If one were to take the Christian doctrine not from one's own inner being, but from the Holy Scriptures situated outside of it, one would thereby impress a legal trait upon the Christian doctrine, make of the Scriptures "a collection of laws of faith."¹⁵⁹⁴⁾ Only afterwards, what the "born-again ego" has said with inner necessity and independently, is to be compared with Scripture and corrected as needed. Hofmann then did not carry out this correction afterwards. Rather, he subsequently corrected the Scriptures according to what had been developed with inner necessity from within, in such a way that he also deleted the *satisfactio vicaria* as a scriptural doctrine. It happened similarly to Höfling. In order to be able to deny the divine command for the order of the ministry, he claims that the apostolic example and the apostolic command for the order and appointment of elders or bishops refer only to apostolic times and congregations that have just come into being. We saw that Scripture says nothing of this limitation. To the same end, he further asserts that the functions of the apostolic presbyterate or episcopate are not certain in Scripture. We saw above that Scripture is very precise and detailed in telling both what the elders or bishops are to be like and what they are to do. He further thinks that the apostolic presbyterate had more of a "governing" meaning. We saw above,

 1591) 1 Thess. 4:3: God's will (θέλημα); 1 Joh. 3:23: God's command (ἐντολή) etc.

1592) Erl. Publication 1852, p. 152.

1593) [*Grundsätze*, 1850, p.](#)

[50.](#)

1594) [*Scripture Proof I*, p. 9 ff.](#)

that precisely the teaching of the Word of God and the refutation of false doctrine that is designated in Scripture is the main task of presbyters or bishops. It serves as a partial excuse for Höfling that his opponents (Münchmeyer, Loehe, Kliefoth, etc.) put forward a roughly Romanizing doctrine of ministry, namely, the doctrine that the public ministry of preaching was not transferred by calling from the Christian congregation, as the original holder of all spiritual power, but was a divine endowment in this sense that it passed directly from the apostles to their disciples as a special "spiritual state," and that this state propagated itself through ordination. They also addressed it as if the means of grace had their proper power and effectiveness only when they were administered by the 'ministers' who had thus come into being. Against this caricature of the doctrine of the public ministry, Höfling rightly says that this would make the public ministers a "means of grace" alongside Word and Sacrament: "The believers cannot see their need for salvation directed both to Word and Sacrament themselves and rather to the divine-privileged organ for their administration and administration. The right efficacy of the means of grace presents itself as dependent on a ceremonial-legal institution; the Holy Spirit no longer works both in them and through them than through the ceremonial-legal organs of their administration." But Höfling's polemic in no way suffers application to the public ministry of preaching taught in the Lutheran Confessions. By the fact that this office has God's command (*mandatum Dei*), its public ministers no more become "means of grace" and "ceremonial-legal organs" than all Christians become means of grace and ceremonial-legal organs by the fact that their doctrines are also according to God's command and order. So then: Although according to Lutheran doctrine the public ministry has *mandatum Dei*, it is also stated and very emphatically inculcated that the power and efficacy of the means of grace in no way depend on the persons of the public ministers, but that the means of grace have all power in themselves, whether they are administered by the pious or the ungodly, laymen or officials, called or hired, by the Pope and emperor or by a boy, etc. It is a false conclusion that the doctrine of the divine order of the ministry tends to make those in the ministry "means of grace" alongside the means of grace. Exactly the opposite is the case. If

it is held that the means of grace have their power and effect through the divine institution, and if it is also held that, as all Christians, so also their public ministers handle the means of grace according to divine order, then all those who are ministered to by the means of grace are induced precisely by the truth of the divine order to disregard entirely the nature of the human person and to adhere only to the means of grace themselves, as if God himself were acting with them. In short, Höfling has not succeeded in keeping the balance in the struggle against a gross Romanistic aberration. In order to thoroughly refute Loehe's etc. direct divine establishment of the public ministry, he thought he had to deny that the indirect establishment taking place through the congregation was divine order or had a divine command. Ströbel summarizes¹⁵⁹⁵⁾ the Lutheran doctrine in this way, which excludes both Loehe's and Höfling's doctrine: "The doctrine of our church concerning the spiritual office is, in short, this: To preach the Word of God to one's neighbor, to administer the sacraments, to forgive sins, to lay hands on one's neighbor, every baptized Christian has a divine right to do this as a spiritual priest (under certain circumstances an unavoidable duty); however, for the sake of order pleasing to God, he should exercise this only in cases of emergency and otherwise make use of the office of the pastors ordinarily called by Christ through the congregation. The Christian congregation, however, must know that it should not let the spiritual office established by the Lord fall or be subjugated by the rabble or by spiritual and worldly tyrants, but should always fill it anew with capable, faithful, God-fearing men until the Lord returns. The pastors, on the other hand, must take comfort in the fact that the office they have received from the congregation is just as certainly a divine one, to be administered only in Christ's name, as if they had received it from Christ himself. For it is an illogical conclusion that he who has the spiritual office not directly from the Lord but from the congregation has it from men and is a minister of men."¹⁵⁹⁶⁾

1595) *Zeitschr. f. luth. Th. u. K.* 1852, p. 699.

1596) Rejection of Loehe's doctrine in L. u. W. 1870, p. 174, and rejection of Loehe's doctrine etc. by the whole article "Antithesen zu den Thesen von Kirche und Amt", p. 161 ff. The first article in the first volume of L. u. W., 1855, p. 1 ff, rejects both Loehe's and Höfling's doctrines.

4. The necessity of the public ministry of preaching. ^

Although the public Ministry of preaching, which is transferred indirectly, by calling on the part of the congregation, is to be held as a divine order, yet an absolute necessity is not to be ascribed to it. Even through the preaching of the Gospel on the part of all Christians, which takes place both with inner necessity and according to divine order, the Holy Spirit is active for the bringing forth and preservation of faith in human hearts. It must be constantly emphasized that the proclamation of the Word by all Christians in the home, in their intercourse with the brethren, and in their intercourse with the world does not stand at the discretion or at the arbitrariness of the Christians, but is of divine order. In so far as Christians do not keep to this order, they fall out of their Christian profession and do untold harm to the Christian Church. Times have come, and they may come again, when unbelief and false doctrine are so rampant that orthodox Christians are dependent on the preaching of the Word in the home. Luther's words belong here:¹⁵⁹⁷⁾ "It may happen that the world will become so Epicurean that in all the world there will be no public preaching chair, and it will be vain epicurean abominations, and the gospel will be received in the homes alone through the house fathers." That the word only read is also the means of grace was explained in detail — also against modern Lutherans — in the doctrine of the means of grace.¹⁵⁹⁸⁾ Walther points to the words of the Formula of Concord: Ministerium ecclesiasticum, hoc est, Verbum Dei praedicatum et auditum, and: Verbum illud, quo vocamur, ministerium Spiritus est,¹⁵⁹⁹⁾ and continues:¹⁶⁰⁰⁾ "It is important to understand this for the sake of those who make the ministry of the parish a means of grace, and coordinate it with the word and sacraments, asserting that the same is absolutely necessary to every man for salvation, so that without the ministry of an ordained minister a man can neither come to faith, nor obtain absolution of his sins, while our Church teaches this only of the oral or outward word, as opposed to a supposed inward word, and to every kind of enthusiasm."

But the truth that the public Ministry is not absolutely


1597) St. L. VI, 938 [§14; not in AE] 1598) p. 125 ff.

1599) 729:30 [Trigl. 1101, Sol. Decl., XII, 30 ]; 710, 29 [Trigl. 1073, Sol. Decl., XI, 29 ]

1600) *K. u. A.*, p. 195. [Church and Ministry p 179; Church & Office, p. 170]

necessary, is not to be abused for the contempt of it. This abuse occurs: 1. when Christians are indolent in hearing the public sermon, with the excuse that they could read the same word "at home";¹⁶⁰¹⁾ 2. when those in public office are indolent in the direction of their ministry, with the excuse that the flock commanded to their care can and should provide for themselves by virtue of the spiritual priesthood;¹⁶⁰²⁾ 3. when Christians are indolent in the establishment and maintenance of schools in which ministers are educated for public service in the church.¹⁶⁰³⁾

5. Calling (*vocatio*) to the public ministry. ^

The necessity of calling has already been addressed in the section "The Relationship of the Ministry to the Spiritual Priesthood of All Christians." Luther: "It is not befitting for one who wants to come forth from himself and appropriate to him alone that which is ours alone." Augsburg Confession, Art. 14 [[Trigl. 49, XIV](#) 1604) — The common distinction between a direct and indirect calling ([vocatio immediata](#) and [mediata](#)) is scriptural. Luther also has it in detailed justification.¹⁶⁰⁵⁾ The immediate calling was had by the prophets and apostles, including Paul.¹⁶⁰⁶⁾ Paul points out

1601) Cf. Luther's crude debate against this damage in the church ([St. L. III, 1736](#)): "Some clever ones say: But we have books, from which we can read it just as well as we heard it in the church from the priest. You read the devil on your head, who then possessed you. If our Lord had known that the Ministry was not necessary, he would have been so wise and prudent that he would not have had Moses preach to you. ... He would have remained a pastor and pastoral caretaker at home.

1602) At all times the church had to complain about the indiscipline of the pastors. Hence the admonitions and warnings of Scripture in the Old and New Testaments: Ezek. 3:17 ff; 33:7 ff; Is. 56:10 ff; 2 Tim. 4:2 ff; 1 Tim. 4:13 ff; Phil. 2:21. Cf. Luther, [St. L. X, 5](#).

1603) The most powerful things that have been written against this indolence are found in the two writings of Luther: "Sermon that one should keep the children in school" (1530; [St. L. X, 417](#)) and: "To the councillors of all cities in Germany that they should establish and keep Christian schools" (1524; [St. L. X, 458 ff.](#)).

1604) On the necessity of calling, cf. the entire section in Walther's *Pastorale*, [pp. 23 ff.](#)

1605) [St. L. XI, 1910 ff.](#) 1606) Acts 22:21.

his direct calling very energetically in the headings of fine letters.¹⁶⁰⁷⁾ The indirect calling is given to the pastors called by the Christian congregations. It is of the greatest importance to note that the indirect calling is no less divine than the direct calling. Acts 20:28 says of the indirectly called elders or bishops of Ephesus that the Holy Spirit had appointed them to shepherd the congregation of God. This is of the greatest importance both for the public ministers of the Word and for those whom they serve with the Word.¹⁶⁰⁸⁾

The question that has caused the most excitement and controversy in the Church and in the world is the question of who are the intermediaries through whom God sets the pastors. The Pope comes forward with the claim that he alone can make "priests" through the bishops he creates. Episcopalians want to do this through bishops to whom apostolic succession attaches. Romanizing Lutherans want to bring about right ministers through the preaching class, which reproduces itself. Also sovereigns and other lords, as such, have vindicated the right to appoint pastors to other people without their consent. On the basis of Scripture it must be said that not the Pope or bishops or pastors or individuals outside or inside a congregation have the right and power to do this, but only the people who possess all the spiritual power that exists here on earth among men, and to whom the Word and Sacrament in particular were originally commanded by Christ: these are the believers or Christians and no one else in the world. The believers have everything (1 Cor. 3:21); the unbelievers have nothing but death and eternal damnation. That Matt. 28:18-20 is not only commanded to the apostles for their person, but to the Christians word and baptism until the last day, is clear from the closing words: "And behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Also in the words of command concerning the Lord's Supper, "Do these things in remembrance of me!" not only the apostles are addressed for their persons, but the Christians until the Last Day, as 1 Cor. 11:26 still expressly says: "As often as ye eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, ye shall proclaim the Lord's death until he come." This is the Scripture

1607) Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1 etc.


1608) See Walther, *Pastorale*, p. 29 f. for more details.

doctrine so clearly expressed in the words of the Smalcald Articles (341, 67-69 [[Trigl. 523, Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops, 67—69](#) [↗](#)): "Where the church is, there is ever the command to preach the gospel. Therefore the churches must retain the power to demand, elect and ordain ministers. And such power is a gift which is actually given to the church" (*proprie*, that is: only to the church and no one else) "by God and cannot be taken away from the church by any human power.".... Here belong the passages of Christ, which testify that the keys are given to the whole Church and not to some, but to persons, as the text says (Matt. 18:20): 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.'" Individuals and societies may validly call, but only when it is enjoined upon them, or at least left to tacito consensu, by those who have this power originally (principaliter et immediate). By the "whole church" of which the Smalcald Articles address is of course not to be understood the church scattered over the whole world (*ecclesia universalis*), but the local church (*ecclesia particularis*), as also immediately on the basis of Matt. 18:20 is added: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." For the church has all spiritual goods and rights, not in so far as it is large or small, but in so far as it consists of believers.¹⁶⁰⁹⁾

Objections have been raised to the congregational election.

1. It was and is said that Acts 14:23 and Tit. 1:5 does not stand for calling or election on the part of the congregation, but on the contrary only reports what Paul and Barnabas did and Titus was supposed to do at Paul's command.

1609) Luther on Matt. 18:19-20 ([St. L., XVII, 1074](#)): "Here we hear that even two or three, gathered in Christ's name, have all the power that St. Peter and all the apostles have. For the Lord Himself is here, as He also says, John 14:23: 'He that loveth Me shall keep My word, and My Father shall love him; and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.' ... We have here the Lord himself over all angels and creatures; who says they shall all have equal power, key and office, even two simple Christians alone, gathered in his name. Let not this Lord make us fools, liars, nor drunkards of the Pope and all devils, but let us trample the Pope under foot, and say that he is a desperate liar, blasphemer, and idolatrous devil, who has snatched the keys to himself alone under St. Peter's name, when Christ has given the same to all alike in common."

There is nothing to be read of any activity or even co-activity of the congregations. Luther rightly reminds:¹⁶¹⁰⁾ "Although Paul commands Titus to ordain priests, it does not follow from this that Titus did it by his own power alone, but that he appointed them according to the example of the apostles by the vote of the people; otherwise the words of Paul would argue with the example of the apostles. Moreover, by the word χειροτονήσαντες used in Acts 14:23, it is clearly expressed that in the appointment of the elders there was a casting of votes on the part of the congregation. Meyer translates χειροτονεῖν as "to vote." He notes, e.g., "Paul and Barnabas voted them presbyters, that is, they conducted their voting among the congregations." In support of this translation, Meyer adds, "The analogy of Acts 6:2-6 demands this observance of the elected word, which, deriving from the old method of election by raising hands, occurs in the New Testament only here and 2 Cor. 8:19, and forbids the general version constituebant (Vulgate, Hammond, Kuinöl, &c.), or eligebant [chose for them](de Wette), so that the appointment would have been merely by apostolic authority (Loehe). Correct is Erasmus: suffragiis delectos. ... Quite arbitrarily wrong are Catholics: it referred to the χειροθεσία [laying on of hands] at ordination of presbyters." Also, the appointment of public ministers by congregational election continued for a long time in the church of the first centuries. The remark in the Smalcald Articles (342, 70 [*Trigl.* 525, *ibid.*, 70 ]): "In former times the people elected parish rulers and bishops" is provable as historically correct.¹⁶¹¹⁾

2. The objection that Matt. 16:18-19 was not originally given to the believers, but to Peter as a privileged person, has already been refuted in detail under the section "The majesty and glory of the Christian church". It was shown that just in this passage, too, the address was only of Peter insofar as he believes, not insofar as he is an apostle or a privileged person.¹⁶¹²⁾ It should be

1610) St. L. XIX, 347.


1611) Cf. the historical proof in Walther, K. u. A., p. 281 ff. [*Church and Ministry, p. 243*] p. 248 ff. Walther also proves as doctrine of all Lutheran theologians that no one can become pastor of a con+gregation without the election, respectively consent of the congregation.

1612) Note 1513.

pointed out here that "the keys of the kingdom of heaven are and can be nothing other than the means of grace, the gospel. By the presentation of the gospel, and by nothing else, sins are forgiven, and so heaven is shut out; by the withholding of the gospel from the apparently impenitent, sins are retained, and so heaven is shut in. Since believers are the persons to whom Christ has entrusted the means of grace, the keys of the kingdom of heaven are *eo ipso* delivered to them."¹⁶¹³⁾

3. The statement of the Lutheran Confessions that the ministry comes from the general calling of the apostles has also been objected to for the election of the congregation.¹⁶¹⁴⁾ This statement, however, does not conflict with the other statement of the confession, that the ministry comes through the calling of the congregation.¹⁶¹⁵⁾ The office of the apostles and the office of the later ministers of the church are the same in content and power. Just as the apostles were commanded not to preach their own word, but God's Word, so also the public ministers called by the congregation are commanded not to preach their own word, but only God's Word. There is indeed this great difference between the apostles and their "disciples" — as Luther calls all pastors after the time of the apostles — that the former spoke and wrote God's Word infallibly, but the latter must take the word they preach from the apostles and are bound to the word of the apostles, so strictly that Christians are commanded to depart from teachers who deviate from the apostles' word.¹⁶¹⁶⁾ But in both cases it is the same office, inasmuch as it has to do merely with the public preaching of the Word of God and gives the same spiritual goods. Hence the series of passages of Scripture in which the apostles place themselves in one class with the elders and bishops, as Peter 1 Pet. 5:1ff.: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder" (συνπρεσβυτερος), and Paul in 1 Cor. 4:1 ff.: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God."¹⁶¹⁷⁾

1613) Chemnitz, *Examen*, 1667, p. 223: *Lutherus ex Verbo Dei docuit, Christ claves, hoc est, ministerium Verbi et sacramentorum, tradidisse et commendasse toti ecclesiae.* [[Google](#)] Cf. Walther v. Kraußbold, *L. u. W.* 1870, p. 179, note.



1614) Smalc. Art. p. 320 [*Trigl.* 525, *ibid.*, 70]  "that the office of the ministry proceeds from the general call of the apostles"]

1615) p. 341, 67.

1616) Rom. 16:17.

1617) Cf. 2 John 1; 3 John 1; 1 Cor. 3:5 ff. etc.

6. Ordination. [^]

The ordination of those called to church ministry with the laying on of hands and prayers is not a divine order, but a church order, because it is mentioned in Scripture, but not commanded.¹⁶¹⁸⁾ Ordination, therefore, belongs to the indifferent things (adiaphora). It is not by ordination, but by calling and accepting it that a person capable of ministry becomes a pastor. Luther's words ([XVII, 114](#)) are well known: "It depends on whether the church and the bishop are one, and the church wants to hear the bishop and the bishop wants to teach the church. This is how it happened. Laying on of hands, blessing, confirm and testify such, as a notary and witnesses testify a secular thing, and as the pastor, so bride and bridegroom bless, their marriage confirms or testifies that they have taken before and publicly confessed." The Smalcald Articles (342, 70 [[Trigl. 525, *ibid.*, 70](#) ]) expressly declare ordination to be a public confirmation of the calling: "For formerly the people elected pastors and bishops. Then came a bishop, either of that church or a neighboring one, who confirmed the one elected by the laying on of hands; and ordination was nothing else than such a ratification." We therefore do not practice the so-called absolute ordination, that is, an ordination without a previously received and accepted call, because it fosters the erroneous opinion "that by ordination a person is admitted into the so-called spiritual state and thus, as an ordained priest, only becomes capable of election".¹⁶¹⁹⁾ It goes without saying that ordination is also a power transferred by the congregation, as it is stated in the Smalcald Articles [[Trigl. 525, *ibid.*, 69](#) ]: "Since the church alone has the priesthood, it must also have the power to elect and ordain ministers."¹⁶²⁰⁾

1618) Walther, *Past.*, [p. 65](#): "The use of ordination is mentioned in Scripture, but Scripture is silent about a divine institution of this use. If, however, it is a divine endowment, the proof *a silentio* applies, however."

1619) Cf. Walther, *Pastorale*, [p. 65](#). Pronouncements of old Lutheran theologians that ordination, on the one hand, should not be overestimated, on the other hand, should not be despised, in Walther, op. cit. [III, 699](#) sq.

1620) So also Balduin, in Baier-Walther [III, 702](#). Likewise Hülsemann: *Potestas ordinandi non inest uni membro ecclesiae, e. g., episcopo, per modum habitus vel characteris permanentis, sed per modum*

There are whimsical things being taught about ordination within Christendom. According to Roman doctrines, there is no other way to become a "priest" than through the ordination of a bishop made by the Pope. Those merely elected and instituted by the Christian people are not servants of the Church, but are to be considered thieves and murderers.¹⁶²¹⁾ This zeal for ordination is a zeal *pro domo*; for the things supposedly wrought by ordination are exceedingly valuable to the kingdom of the Pope. By ordination, in fact, not only is the Holy Spirit given *ex opere operato*, and a *character indelebilis* pronounced, but, above all things, power is conferred which neither the angels nor the Virgin Mary have, namely, the power to say Mass, that is, to make (*conficere*) the Body and Blood of Christ, to offer as a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead, and thus to secure for the Pope dominion over consciences and access to the treasures of the world.¹⁶²²⁾ The Episcopalians, while omitting the Pope, insist that only through the ordination of bishops descended in unbroken *succession* from the apostles (*apostolic succession*) can bishops, priests, and deacons become and administer the church office.¹⁶²³⁾ The Romanizing Lutherans, too, who do not allow the public ministry to come about through the calling of the congregation, but conceive of it as a "special Christian state" that propagates from state to state through the transfer of the office, naturally make ordination a divine order.¹⁶²⁴⁾

7. The administrators of the public Ministry do not constitute a spiritual state distinct from the Christian state. [^]

Luther also occasionally uses the expressions "spiritual state," "clergy," and "priests" of those who serve in church offices, in accommodation to existing usage.¹⁶²⁵⁾

commissionis et potestatis transitoriae, qualem mandatarius [an agent] *aut negotiorum gestor accipit a principali suo.* [[Google](#)] (*Praelect. in libr. Cone.*, p. 838.)

1621) Trident, *De sacram. ord.*, sess. 23, c. 4.

1622) Trident, *De sacram. ord.*, c. 1-4, *unb bte canones* 1-8.

1623) *Form and Manner of Making, Ordainmg, and Consecrating Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.* Preface. The Book of Common Prayer, Philadelphia, 1854, p. 612.

1624) Cf. Große, *Unterscheidungslehren*, [1891](#), [p. 13](#), [8](#).

1625) [St. L. X, 423 ff](#); [XIX, 113 f.](#) etc.

But Luther also reminds us throughout that this designation is not taken from Scripture and is very misleading. According to Scripture, all in whom the Holy Spirit dwells and works through faith in Christ, that is, all Christians, and only they, are of "spiritual state" or "clergy". It is not to a narrower circle within the Christian Church, but to all Christians, that Scripture attributes the anointing, τὸ χρίσμα, which it teaches all things (1 John 2:27). All Christians are called spiritual, πνευματικοί (Gal. 6:1), the spiritual house, οἶκος πνευματικός, and the spiritual priesthood, ἱεράτευμα ἅγιον (1 Pet. 2:5). It is, therefore, really not a scriptural but a scripturally contradictory use of language to call within the Christian church the "spiritual estate," "clergy," and "priests" to a limited number of persons, the ministers in ecclesiastical offices. "The Holy Spirit" — says Luther¹⁶²⁶ — "has diligently prevented in the New Testament that the name *sacerdos*, priest or priest, is not given to any apostle nor to some other offices, but is only the name of the baptized or Christians, as an innate, hereditary name from baptism; for none of us is born in baptism an apostle, preacher, teacher, pastor, but vain priests and pastors are we all born; wherefore from such born priests they are taken, and called and chosen unto such offices, which of all of us shall exercise such ministry."

We express ourselves correctly when we say that the administrators of the public Ministry are the ministers among Christians (*ministrantes inter Christianos*). Word and Sacrament, in which they minister, are and remain the immediate property of the Christian congregation and are transferred by the congregation to certain persons for the administration of the fellowship. In this sense the administrators of the Ministry are called in Scripture not only God's and Christ's servants,¹⁶²⁷ but also the congregation's servants, 2 Cor. 4:6: "We your servants for Jesus' sake," δοῦλοι υμῶν διὰ Ἰησοῦν. After Luther said of the appellation "priests" that it was "assumed from either paganism or Judaism to the great detriment of the church," he continues, "But according to the Evangelical Scriptures they would much better be called servants, deacons, bishops, stewards. ... Paul also calls himself *servum*, that is, a servant;

1626) St. L. XIX, 1260.

1627) 1 Cor. 4:1; Tit. 1:7; 2 Tim. 2:24; Luke 12:42

he also speaks more than once: *Servio in Evangelio*, I serve the Gospel. He does this so that he does not establish a rank or order, a right or a certain dignity, as our Scholastics would have it, but boasts of the office and the mark alone and lets the right and dignity of the priesthood remain in the congregation." [Walther](#): "The ministry of preaching is not a special, more sacred state standing in opposition to common Christianity, like the Levitical priesthood, but an office of service."¹⁶²⁸⁾ In this sense the Smalcald Articles also say "that the church is more than the ministers";¹⁶²⁹⁾ for the church and its ministers relate to each other as incumbents and employees, or those entrusted with the office. In this relationship it is also justified that the congregations have the right and duty to supervise the conduct of their public servants and to dismiss them from office if they no longer have the qualities prescribed by God and are no longer able or willing to carry out the functions of the office.¹⁶³⁰⁾ [Luther](#) writes about the power of dismissal of the congregation, while at the same time opposing the Roman *character indelebilis* ([X, 1591](#)): "If they are all ministers, then their priestly, indelible mark and the eternity of their priestly dignity also goes with them, and that one must always remain a priest is also only a fictitious thing, but one may well dismiss a servant if he never wanted to be faithful. Again, he may be kept in office as long as he is deserving and pleasing to the congregation, just as any one who administers a common office in secular matters among like brethren; indeed, the minister in spiritual matters is much better to be deposed than any other in secular matters, because if he is unfaithful he is much more unpleasant than any secular one, who would harm only temporal goods of this life, but the spiritual one devastates and corrupts eternal goods also."

As for the expression that congregations "[transfer](#)" the public ministry by calling to persons competent to do so, one can only wonder that the same has been contested even by Lutherans. The expression is to be called adequate as long as the teaching of Scripture is held that Word and Sacrament are given to all Christians for their possession and handling

1628) *Kirche und Amt*, p. 221. [[Walther and the Church](#), p. 73;]

1629) 342, 72 [[Trigl. 507, 11](#) [↻](#)]: *ecclesiam esse supra ministros*.

1630) Col. 4:17; Joh. 10:5; Rom. 16:17. 18; Matt. 7:15.

by Christ. If it is now further conceded that there should be an office among Christians in which individual doctrinally competent persons serve the congregation with Word and Sacrament, this office can only come about by transfer. Even Hase describes as "Evangelical church doctrine": "In Christ and in the congregation is the source of all church authority. Therefore every church office is only transferred, reverts to the congregation in case of abuse, and in case of emergency every spiritual act can be performed by every member of the congregation."¹⁶³¹ In addition, the term "transfer" has also been abundantly used by the old Lutheran theologians.¹⁶³²

Quite correctly, Hase says that according to "Evangelical doctrine" the source of all church authority is in the congregation. Everything that the pastors of a congregation do as pastors is delegated, that is, they do only on behalf of the congregation. This is especially true of the imposition of excommunication.¹⁶³³ According to the Smalcald Articles (340, 60. 74), "all pastors" should have the jurisdiction (jurisdictio) to "banish those who lie in public vices". But this is not to be done "without legal knowledge". To this "legal knowledge" belongs above all the proceedings of each case before the congregation and the judgment of the congregation. Luther's coarse designation of excommunication pronounced without knowledge and judgment of the congregation is well known.¹⁶³⁴ He says: "The congregation that is to hold such an excommunication should know and be certain how he deserves the excommunication and how

1631) Ev. Dogmatik³, p. 494 [4th ed., p. 498].


1632) Cf. the quotations in Walther, *Kirche und Amt*, p. 327 ff. [*Church and Ministry*, p. 280 ff.] Brenz in commentary on John 20: "The church has its ministers to whom the public handling of the gospel, that is, of the forgiveness and retention of sins, is transferred (*demandata est*)." Polycarp Leyser in Gospel Harmony, ch. 92, p. 1748: "This power" (to loose or bind) "is in Matt. 18:18 given by Christ to the Church, which the same may properly transfer (*deferre*) to persons lawfully called to it." Hülsemann, *Praelect. in libr. Conc.*, p. 838, says that the power of ordination is also with the congregation and only belongs to other people on a transferable basis (*per modum commissionis*). Balduin, *Tractatus de cas. consc.*, p. 1104: "As the keys are given by the householder to the housewife, so also Christ, as the Lord of His house, which is the church, has given the keys to His bride, who commits (*committit*) the same to her servants, who are called stewards or stewards of the mysteries of God."

1633) The whole doctrine of church discipline and excommunication is set forth in detail in Walther, *Pastorale*, pp. 315-354.

1634) Schrift von den Schlüsseln, 1530. St. L. XIX, 950 ff.

here the text of Christ (Matt. 18:17-18) states; otherwise it would want to be deceived and accept a lying ban and thereby do injustice to the neighbor.... Here, since it concerns souls, the congregation should also "be with judge and mistress" (landlady)." Very correctly Löschner describes as Lutheran the doctrine according to which the congregation recognizes and decides the excommunication and the pastor, in his capacity as public servant of the church, has the proclamation of the excommunication.¹⁶³⁵⁾

8. The power (*potestas*) of the ministry. ^

Since the Ministry is the office of teaching the Word of God, but the word of man is forbidden in the Christian Church, obedience is due to the Ministry as to God Himself, in so far as it proclaims the Word of God. This includes scriptural words such as these: Heb. 13:17: "Obey your teachers and follow them" (παίθεσθε τοῖς ἡγούμενοις ὑμῶν καὶ νπαίχετε), Luke 10:16: "He who hears you hears me; and he who despises you despises me." To be obedient to teachers beyond God's Word is not commanded to Christians, but harshly forbidden.¹⁶³⁶⁾ That indifferent things are not ordered by the pastor or the pastors, but by the whole congregation of each place by mutual agreement (*per mutuum consensum*), has already been explained.¹⁶³⁷⁾ Against the calling of the Romans to Hebr. 13:17, Luke 10:16 etc. the Apology (289, 18-21 [[Trigl 449, XXVIII, 18 ff.](#) ]) says: "So it is also certain that this word of the Lord Christ: 'He who hears you hears me,' does not speak of the traditions, but is strictly contrary to them. For the apostles do not receive a mandatum cum libera, that is, a completely free, unmeasured command and power, but have a measured command, namely, not to preach their own word, but God's word and the gospel. ... Therefore this word of traditions cannot be understood. For Christ wills that they should teach in this way, so that Christ himself may be heard through their mouths. So they do not have to preach their own word, but his word, his voice and gospel, Christ is to be heard. This comforting word, which most strongly confirms our doctrine and contains much needed teaching and consolation for Christian

1635) Fortgesetzte Sammlung etc., 1724, p. 476. In Walther, *Pastorale*, p. 325. on the rejection of this doctrine on the part of American Lutherans, cf. the quotations in Große, [Unterscheidungslehren, p. 5 f.](#)

1636) Matt. 23:8; Rom. 16:17.

1637) Under the section "*Ecclesia repraesentativa*," p. 492.

consciences, is what the rude asses point to their foolish statutes, their food, drink, clothing and such childish works. They also put on this passage. Heb. 13: Obey them that have the rule over you,' etc. This passage requires obedience to the gospel, for it does not give the bishops their own dominion or lordship apart from the gospel; neither should the bishops make traditions contrary to the gospel, nor interpret their traditions contrary to the gospel. For if they do, the gospel forbids us to be obedient to them, as Paul says to the Galatians: 'If any man preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed!'"

9. The relationship of the servants of the Church to each other. [^]

The basic truth that Christ is the sole ruler in the Church through his Word also regulates the relationship of the servants of the Church to each other. Just as the ministers of the Church have no dominion over the congregations, neither do they have dominion over one another. All superordination and subordination among them is not divine, but only human right. Luther expresses this thus: "Neither is the Pope higher than the bishops, nor is the bishop higher than the presbyters by divine right." ¹⁶³⁸⁾ The contrary doctrines of the Romanists, ¹⁶³⁹⁾ the Episcopalians ¹⁶⁴⁰⁾, and other Romanizing

1638) *Nec papa est episcopis, nec episcopus est superior presbyteris iure divino.* [[Google](#)]

1639) Trident, *sess. XXIII, De sacramento ordinis, can. 6*: "If anyone says that in the Catholic Church there is no hierarchy instituted by divine order, which consists of the bishops, priests and ministers (*quae constat ex episcopis, presbyteris et ministris*), let him be accursed!" *Can. 7*: "If anyone says that the bishops are not higher than the priests ... let him be accursed!" *Can. 8*: "If anyone says that the bishops who are assumed by the authority of the Roman Pontiff" (*assumuntur*, namely to the ministry) "are not legitimate and true bishops, but a human creation (*figmentum*), let him be accursed!" The Roman Catechism (II, 7, qu. 25) enumerates four different degrees of priestly ordination: Priests, Bishops, Archbishops, Patriarchs, and then places above all of them the Pope. "Apart from all these, the Catholic Church has always revered the Roman Pontiff ..."; she recognizes "in him the highest degree of dignity and the fullness of jurisdiction, conferred on him not by some synodical or other human decisions, but by God. Therefore he, the father and governor of all the believers and bishops and the rest of the rulers ..., stands before the whole Church as the successor of Peter and the true and lawful governor of Christ the Lord."

1640) Cf. [Günther, Symbolik, p. 370](#), where the prayers at the ordination of deacons, priests and bishops are communicated.

Protestants¹⁶⁴¹⁾ has not the slightest support in Scripture. As far as the alleged difference between presbyters and bishops is concerned, Scripture calls one and the same person presbyter or bishop, as is clear from Acts 20:17, cf. 28, and Titus 1:5, cf. 7.¹⁶⁴²⁾ In short, there is no room in the Christian church for man's rule, under whatever name and pretext it may be exercised, because Christ alone rules the church through his word.

10. The Ministry is the highest office in the Church. ^

Luther often calls the public ministry the highest office in the church. In what sense, he takes it himself abundantly. In the church, everything should be done according to God's Word or, which is the same thing, everything should remain under the standard of the Word of God. Now if someone is transferred the office of the word in a Christian congregation, he has with it the office of teaching how all other offices in the congregation are to "go". Luther writes:¹⁶⁴³⁾

1641) The Irvingians also teach a church office "in threefold gradation" according to divine right: bishops, priests and deacons. Quoted in Günther, op. cit. p. 370 [Popular Symbolics, pp. 324, 327, 351].

1642) Alford remarks on 1 Tim. 3:1: "The ἐπίσκοποι of the New Testament have officially nothing in common with our bishops. The identity of the ἐπίσκοπος and πρεσβύτερος in apostolic times is evident from Tit. 1:5-7." The same points to Acts 20:17, what manipulations became common early in the church and later in England to make the passages of Scripture say what they did in the interest of Episcopalianism. Alford says: "τούς πρεσβυτερονς, called v. 28 ἐπισκόπους. This circumstance began very early to contradict the growing views of the apostolic institution and necessity of prelatical episcopacy. Thus Irenaeus, III. 14. 2, p. 201: *In Mileto convocatis episcopis et presbyteris, qui erant ab Epheso et a reliquis proximis civitatibus*' [Google] Here we see, 1. the two, bishops and presbyters, distinguished as if *both* were sent forth that the titles might not seem to belong to the same persons, and 2. other neighboring churches also brought in, in order that there might not seem to be ἐπίσκοποι in one church only. That neither of these was the case is clearly shown by the plain words of this verse: He sent to *Ephesus*, and summoned the *elders of the church*. So early did interested and disingenuous interpretations begin to cloud the light which Scripture might have thrown on ecclesiastical questions. The E.V. had hardly dealt fairly in this case with the sacred text in rendering ἐπισκόπους, v. 28, 'overseers,' whereas it ought there, as in all other places, to have been *bishops*, that the fact of *elders and bishops having been originally and apostolically synonymous* might be apparent to the ordinary English reader, which now it is not."

1643) St. L. X. 1592.

"If the ministry of the word is given to one, all the ministries that are established in the church through the word are also given to him, that is, the power to baptize, to bless¹⁶⁴⁴, to bind and loose, to pray, to judge or to pass judgment. For the office of preaching the gospel is the highest of all; for it is the right apostolic office, which takes the foundation of all other offices, to which all belong, to build upon the first, as there are the offices of teachers, of prophets, of governors, of those who have the gift of healing." Likewise [X, 1806](#). Luther remarks ([XII, 338](#)) on the description of a bishop who, according to 1 Tim. 3:5, is to care for the congregation of God: "Now these are the ones who are to see over all offices that the teachers wait for their office, are not tardy, that the servants distribute the goods rightly and are not lax." Furthermore X, 1648: "To whom the Ministry is given, to him is given the highest office in Christendom: he may also baptize afterwards. If he does not wish to do so, he may remain in preaching alone and leave baptism and other sub-offices to others, as Christ did and Paul and all the apostles, Apostles 6." ¹⁶⁴⁵

11. The Antichrist. [^]

The Scriptures use the word "antichrist" in a general and in a specific sense. In the passage 1 John 2:18, all false teachers are called "anti-Christ" (αντίχριστοι πολλοί γεγόνασιν). The reason for this designation is revealed clearly enough in Scripture. Because the Scriptures command that in Christ's church only Christ's word shall be taught and reign,¹⁶⁴⁶ so all who teach any other word are *eo ipso* Christ's adversaries, rebels in his kingdom. ¶ But 2 Thess. 2:3-12 the word Antichrist is evidently used in a special sense, namely, to designate an adversary of Christ in whom the "many antichrists" are gathered into one, so that in this one the apostasy par excellence κατ' ἐξοχὴν (ἡ ἀποστασία) makes its appearance. In this special sense ὁ αντίχριστος also stands in 1 John 2:18 next to the πολλοὶ αντίχριστοι as distinct from them, "Ye have

1644) That is, to administer the Lord's Supper ([X, 1576](#)).

1645) Cf. Walther on "The Ministry as the Highest Office in the Church, from Which All Other Church Offices Flow," *Kirche und Amt*, [pp. 342 ff.](#) [[Walther and the Church, p. 78 f.](#)]

1646) Matt. 28:20; Joh. 8:31-32; 17:20; 1 Pet. 4:11; 1 Tim. 6:3 ff.

heard that Antichrist is coming (ερχεται), and now many antichrists have have become" (γεγόνασιν, that is, already there).¹⁶⁴⁷⁾ That to be grasped futurally is enforced by the opposition in which it stands to the perfect tense: they, the many antichrists, have become, are already there. In the many antichrists, already present in the false teachers, the spirit is active that will present itself in full expression in the Antichrist κατ' ἐξοχήν. Paul expresses this 2 Thess. 2:7 like this: Τό μυστήριον ἤδη ενεργεῖται τῆς ανομίας. ["The mystery of iniquity doth already work."]

The characteristics of the Antichrist are described in detail in 2 Thess. 2. They are the following:

1. The position that is proper to the Antichrist is called apostasy absolutely (ἡ ἀποστασία), v. 3. of course, not a political apostasy is to be thought of, but an apostasy from the Christian religion, because in the whole context there is no address of political or social, but only of things that belong to the field of religion. What the Antichrist represents are "powerful errors", "lies", and those who adhere to the Antichrist have not accepted the love of "truth", that is, of Christian truth, and are eternally lost, vv. 10-42. Even Lünemann, who otherwise misunderstands the whole passage, says correctly in regard to the ἀποστασία: "Not apostasy in the political sense, but solely religious apostasy, that is, apostasy from God and true religion, can have been meant by the ἀποστασία. To this assumption compels, 1. By what is said of the ἄνθρωπος τῆς αμαρτίας in immediate internal connection with apostasy, 2. By the characteristic of ἀποστασία v. 3 by ἀνομία (lawlessness) v. 7, 3. by the constant Biblical use of language. Cf. Act. 21:21; 1 Tim. 4:1. According to this, the view that a mixture of religious and political apostasy is to be thought of must also be rejected as inadmissible."

2. The Antichrist has his seat in the temple or house of God (ὁ ναός του Θεοῦ), v. 4, that is, in the Christian church. The assumption that the Antichrist will choose the pagan idolatrous temples as his seat hardly deserves the name of an invasion. Paul does not call the idolatrous temples "God's house," but the

¹⁶⁴⁷⁾ So correctly also Huther, Sander.

Christian church.¹⁶⁴⁸⁾ Then the Antichrist with his sitting in the idol temple would not be a "mystery of wickedness", but a wickedness that is obvious to Christians from the beginning.

3. The behavior of the Antichrist corresponds to his sitting in the temple. He behaves as if he were God himself, v. 4. He exalts himself above all authorities that exist in the world (ἐπὶ πάντα λεγόμενον θεόν ἢ οὐρανόν), and his exaltation goes so far, that he sits down in the temple of God as a god and makes a show of himself that he is God (ἀποδεικνύντα εαυτὸν ὅτι ἐστὶ θεός). By the πᾶς λεγόμενος θεός ἡ οὐρανός, of course, we are not to think also of the gods of the heathen—for exaltation over these is not impiety—but of those persons in the world who, though not God by their very nature, are called gods because of divine functions assigned to them, such as the magisterial and parental estate (dei nuncupativi). The concept of λεγόμενοι θεοί is also clearly defined in Scripture..¹⁶⁴⁹⁾

4. The Antichrist is not the devil himself, as some have thought, but his future (παρουσία) happens according to the action of Satan (κατ' ἐνέργειαν τοῦ Σατανά), in that his kingdom is set up and supported with all kinds of lying powers, signs and wonders.¹⁶⁵⁰⁾

5. The Antichrist will remain until the Last Day. Christ will only dismiss him by his visible appearance for judgment (καταργήσεται).

So who is this Antichrist? If we take the listed characteristics together — and in their totality they are meant — they neither fit to a political strongman like Nero, Napoleon, Boulanger etc.. (they did not pose as

1648) 1 Cor. 3:16 ff; 1 Tim. 3:15; 2 Tim. 2:20 etc.

1649) Joh. 10:34. 35; 1 Cor. 8:5; Rom. 13:1 ff. Buddeus, Instit. theol. dogm. 1741, p. 1224: *In templo Dei sedebit, ὡς θεός, ut Deus, hoc est, ea sibi vindicans, quae soli Deo sunt propria, adeoque se pro Deo quodam venditans. Eodem pertinet, quod ibidem Paulus dicit fore, ut se efferat im Deus, hoc est, super omnes magistratus, reges, principesque. Quo ipso potestatem vere divinam sibi tribuit, cum soli Deo proprium sit, quod sit Rex regum et Dominus dominantium.* [[Google](#)]

1650) The genitive ψεύδους belongs to all three nouns. The powers, signs and wonders belong to the realm of lies, whose father is the devil, Joh. 8:44.

church greats) or the obvious unbelievers and scoffers (who do not want to have anything to do with the temple of God), ¹⁶⁵¹⁾ but only on a historical phenomenon in the world, namely the Roman Papacy. ¶ First of all, in the Papacy there is the most decisive and conceivable apostasy from the Christian religion. It is well known that this doctrine by which alone a man can be saved is that of salvation through faith in Christ without any works of his own. This is the article, as Luther says, and for which he has the approval of every Christian, "*qui solus ecclesiam Dei gignit, nutrit, aedificat, servat, defendit; ac sine eo ecclesia Dei non potest una hora subsistere*." ¹⁶⁵²⁾ What for the natural life is the air, that for the spiritual life is the doctrine of justification by faith without man's own works. But this doctrine is officially cursed by the Papacy, ¹⁶⁵³⁾ and the whole machinery of the papal church is set against this doctrine. This is truly this apostasy (ἡ ἀποστασία) from the Christian religion, and the personal representative of it, the Pope, is truly the greatest adversary of Christ and His Church under Christ's name. As certainly as the Christian Church consists of men who, through the action of the Holy Spirit, believe that they have a gracious God, without works of their own, for Christ's sake alone, so certainly does the Pope, under Christ's name, cast an excommunication on the whole Christian Church, and is continually engaged in destroying the Christian Church, e.g., making the children, who under him have become members of the Christian Church through Holy Baptism, disgusting with Christ and leading them to trust in their own works. ¶ Secondly, the papacy is not outside but inside the Christian church, because it has many members of the church among it, first of all the baptized children, then also adults, who, despite the seductive environment of the gospel that occasionally becomes loud, trust in Christ's merit alone. ¹⁶⁵⁴⁾ ¶ Furthermore: That the Pope does not want to be subject to anyone, but wants to be the supreme in church and world, is a generally known fact. Although he curses and dismisses the only way to salvation, he still claims that only those men can be saved who submit to him. He changes Word of God and commandments according to his will, he wants to judge all,

1651) L. u. W. 1869, p. 39 ff.

1652) St. L. XIV, 168. Opp. v. a. VII, 612.

1653) Trident, sess. VI, can. 11. 12. 20.

1654) Luther XVII, 2191.

but be judged by no one; indeed, he expressly claims infallibility for himself. He also claims sublimity over all secular authorities and demands from them that they recognize his supremacy as secular authorities and place themselves at the service of his kingdom. ¶ Likewise, it is common knowledge that the papacy uses all kinds of lying powers, signs and wonders in its service in the past and now.¹⁶⁵⁵⁾ ¶ Nor can it be denied that the papacy has remained to this day, and indeed has remained the same, even though its former unrestricted rule over the world and the church was thoroughly broken by the Reformation. ¶ Therefore, the Lutheran Confessions rightly says: "Thus all the vices prophesied in the Holy Scriptures of the antichrist rhyme with the papal kingdom and its members." Furthermore: *Haec doctrina ostendit, papam esse ipsum verum antichristum.*¹⁶⁵⁶⁾

1655) Luther rightly points out that the power exercised by the papacy can only be explained by diabolical effects. It is not only against the Word of God, but also against all reason. No one loves it; even its own followers do not love it; but everything fears it, deceived and held captive by the pretense of piety and by the signs and wonders of falsehood. (Opp. v. a. V, 356. St. L. XVIII, 1529.)

1656) Smalc. Art. 336, 39 ff. [Trigl. 515, Power and Primacy of Pope, 39 &] Philippi (Doctrines of the Antichrist, p. 67): "In the papacy is found, step by step, what the Holy Scriptures say of the Antichrist. Here is found not only apostasy and false doctrine in general, but elevation of man to the temple of God in God's stead (think of the two newest dogmas: *immaculata conceptio* and infallibility); here human authority takes the place of Holy Scriptures, human righteousness the place of the righteousness of Jesus Christ; here human commandments are elevated above God's law; here passages of Scripture that go to Christ (e.g. Is. 28:16; Ps. 72:11; Matt. 28:18; Rev. 5:5) are applied to a man, the Pastor; yes, here a man arrogates to himself the highest power not only on earth, but also in heaven through indulgences, canonization of the deceased, transubstantiation, and the like. Here a man claims *iure diviuo* to be the rightful and sole owner of all spiritual and temporal power on earth, so that he not only wants to order divine services and proclaim doctrines of faith, but even to make salvation dependent on faith in his divine authority; here we find contempt for the divine order of marriage (celibacy); here we find striving for world domination, courting world power, exploiting world power for selfish purposes, using unholy means allegedly for holy purposes; here we find streams of spilled martyr's blood: here are found lying signs and wonders (think of Luise Lateau, Lourdes and Marpingen, of the miraculous images of Mary and the saints, etc.) etc. etc. All these are such characteristic traits that we cannot but say: the Pope is the Antichrist."

Against this it has been objected that the Antichrist prophesied in 2 Thess. 2 is an individual ("individual person"). This is not what is said in the passage. Rather, what is said there points beyond the duration of a human life. The mystery of wickedness is already effective at the time of the apostle, but there is an obstacle that holds back its manifestation; the obstacle must first be removed. This is followed by the manifestation of the Antichrist and his eventual destruction by the appearance of Christ for judgment. Also the many lying powers, signs and wonders, by which the Antichrist builds and maintains his kingdom, the mass seduction to unrighteousness among those who are lost, let us think of a longer period. Philippi therefore judges: "There is no exegetically more unfounded and arbitrary assertion than that 2 Thess. 2:3. 4 can only be referred to a concrete, individual person."¹⁶⁵⁷⁾ — Furthermore, it has been objected against the confessional statement that the Antichrist prophesied in 2 Thess. 2 stands before us fully developed in the papacy, that the question of the Antichrist is a historical question and therefore cannot be answered with certainty of faith. This objection is based on an assertion which those who raise the objection cannot and do not want to maintain. That in Jesus of Nazareth the prophesied Christ appeared, was for the Jews at Christ's time also a "historical" question. But as it could be recognized by the Jews on the basis of the Scriptures and from the addresses and works of Christ with certainty of faith that in Jesus of Nazareth "the Christ" had appeared, so we can recognize on the basis of the Scriptures and from the addresses and works of the papacy that in the papacy "the Antichrist" has recognizably placed himself before us.¹⁶⁵⁸⁾

1657) *Dogmatik* VI, 181. Buddeus, *Inst. theol. dogm.*, p. 1223: Quae de antichristo 2 Thess. 2:3. 4 sqq. referuntur, ita comparata sunt, ut nec ab uno homine, nec eo temporis spatio, quod unius hominis aetati respondet, peragi queant.

1658) So also Spener: "But how do we prove that the Pope is the great anti-Christian? Answer: In the same way that we prove that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Christ or Messiah, namely, that Jesus is the Christ or Messiah, because everything that was prophesied about the Messiah before in the prophets belongs to him, and to no one else besides him. So also the Pope must be the Antichrist, because everything is directed to him, and on the other hand it cannot be shown that what the Scripture says about the Antichrist belongs to some other. ... This truth and matter, as the Roman Pope of the

That the Romanists deny that "papam esse ipsum verum antichristum" is not to be blamed on them from their point of view. But that also the modern Protestant theologians, the Lutheran ones included, deny almost unanimously that the pope is the Antichrist,¹⁶⁵⁹⁾ comes from the fact that with their denial of *sola gratia* (synergism) and with their "liberal" position on Scripture (denial of inspiration) they do not recognize 1. 2. what an abomination there is in the Pope's dismissal of the authority of the Word of God, and thus of Christ's authority, and his substitution of his own authority, and all this under Christ's name and under a great appearance of holiness. ¶ It has been argued that the papacy still confesses "main articles" of Christian doctrine, e.g., the articles of the Trinity and of the God-man person of Christ. On the other hand, it must be said that no man will be saved by these "main articles" if the Christian doctrine of justification is also denied and cursed. Without the article of justification all other doctrines are empty help.¹⁶⁶⁰⁾ That the papacy still professes those "main articles" is part of the outward adornment by which it seeks to cover its apostasy from the Christian doctrine. ¶ It has also been argued that there have been some personally honorable, even "pious" popes. This objection is not based on Christian judgment. There can be no talk of piety in the case of Popes, since even the "pious" among them stand at the head of the machinery and direct the machinery by which the Christian doctrine of justification, that is, the Christian faith, is dismissed and cursed.¹⁶⁶¹⁾ If Popes are respectable in the civil sense,

Antichrist, we must diligently remember and not let ourselves regret the time we have now spent listening to it. This article is one to which our church expressly professed itself in the Smalcald Articles, and we must not let go of this truth either, and the closer we find ourselves to the Roman Babel pouring out its last fury and persecution upon us, the more we need to be completely founded and strengthened in this knowledge, so that we may learn to guard against it; as then I consider this to be a certainty: Whoever does not recognize the papal kingdom for the kingdom of Antichrist, does not yet stand so firmly that he would not like to be seduced to it by this or that inducement." (*Gerechter Eifer wider das antichrist. Papsttum* 1714, p. 39 f.; in Baier [III, 681.](#))

1659) Cf. Baier-Walther [III, 683.](#)

1660) Cf. Luther's exposition, [St. L., VIII, 629 ff.](#)

1661) [Luther, XVIII, 1530](#): "The papacy is such a sovereignty that exterminates faith and the gospel."

this is also part of the outward adornment by which the inner, spiritual abomination of the Antichrist is concealed. All characteristics mentioned in 2 Thess. 2 fit to all Popes. Very correctly, Joh. Adam Osiander:¹⁶⁶²⁾ "It is to be noted that the essence of the Antichrist does not consist in a personal righteousness or impiety, but in the nature of the office; but there is no Pope, however many and however righteous, who did not say that he was the general head of the Church, who did not exercise dominion over spiritual and worldly things, who did not approve of the curses of the Council of Trent, even if he temporarily refrained from murder and tyranny for political reasons." This has been expressed even more clearly by Luther when he states that the Papacy is not the Pope's malice, but the Papacy's malice. He says:¹⁶⁶³⁾ "There is much else about the sovereignty which the Pope has, and about all the other sovereignties in the whole world, which, if they be good or evil, may not do harm, whether they be tolerated. But the Papacy is such a sovereignty that destroys the faith and the gospel. ... Therefore the wickedness of the prince is not punished, but the wickedness of the sovereignty, which is such that it cannot or may not be administered by a pious, honest prince, but only by him who is an adversary to Christ."

It has been asked whether the doctrine that the Pope is the Antichrist belongs to the "fundamental articles" of Christian doctrine. Our answer is that this doctrine is certainly not one of the fundamental articles, because a man is a Christian only through the knowledge of Christ and not through the knowledge of the Antichrist. Before and after the revelation of the Antichrist, there have been many righteous Christians, although they did not recognize the Pope as the Antichrist. But every teacher in the Christian church is weak in theology who, although familiar with the historical appearance of the papacy, does not recognize in the Papacy the Antichrist prophesied in 2 Thess. 2.¹⁶⁶⁴⁾

1662) *Colleg. theol.* VIII, 162; in Baier-Walther [III, 682](#).

1663) [St. L. XVIII, 1530](#). opp. v. a. V, 357.

1664) On the "Antichrist" cf. Baier-Walther [III, 672](#) sqq. [L. u. W. 7, 267; 13, 297; 16, 312; 5, 311; 15, 39; 15, 198; 16, 339; 17, 47; 26, 94; 50, 489. Der Lutheraner 24, 113, 81, 126, 182; 30, 41](#) [[Walther and Loehle](#)]; [31, 25](#). Philippi, [L. v. Antichrist 1877](#).

Eternal election. [^]

(*De electione aeterna sive de praedestinatione*)

The doctrine of eternal election, or Election of Grace, has been variously posed within dogmatics. Some have treated it already in the doctrine of God, especially in the doctrine of the decrees of God (*de decretis divinis*).¹⁶⁶⁵⁾ Others have thought that with the doctrine of God's grace in Christ there is a suitable place for the doctrine of eternal election, because eternal election is an Election of Grace.¹⁶⁶⁶⁾ Still others treat it according to the doctrine of the way of salvation before the doctrine of the church.¹⁶⁶⁷⁾ This is also a fitting place because eternal election stands in causal relationship to the church.¹⁶⁶⁸⁾ We let it follow the doctrine of the church and can cite as a reason for this that in Scripture men who have become members of the Christian church through faith are addressed as elect.¹⁶⁶⁹⁾ Then we want to express by this position that in Scripture the doctrine of the Election of Grace is not given a central but a serving position. It serves the exposition of *sola gratia*, as has already been shown in the summary exposition of the doctrine of the appropriation of salvation and is to be further expounded here. We will only remind you that the dogmatic grouping of the Christian doctrines is relatively indifferent as long as the doctrines are merely drawn from Scripture.¹⁶⁷⁰⁾

1. The concept of eternal election. [^]

Quite apart from what the Scriptures teach about eternal election, we already know that Christians do not owe their entire Christian state according to beginning, middle, and end to any good condition, merit, or any action on their part, but that it is God alone who calls, converts, justifies, sanctifies, and sustains them in the faith by His grace in Christ through the action of the Holy Spirit, which is accomplished through the means of grace. This was demonstrated in the


1665) So also A. L. Gräbner, *Doctrinal Theology*, § 61 [or [here](#)].

1666) So Quenstedt, Hollaz etc. 1667) So Baier. [Ed. — [3:531](#) ff. ?]


1668) Rom. 11:1-10; Matt. 24:22.

1669) Eph. 1:3 ff; 2 Thess. 2:13-14 etc. 1670) [II, 499 ff.](#)

presentation of said doctrines as Christian doctrine revealed in Scripture. To this the Scripture now adds this revelation that God has already intended to do to Christians from eternity what he is doing to them in this time. This and nothing else is the scriptural doctrine of Eternal Election. We can therefore describe the Election of Grace thus: Eternal election is the act of God upon Christians whereby God has provided them from eternity by grace for Christ's sake with calling, conversion, justification, sanctification, and preservation. This description is scriptural. Scripture traces the acts of grace which God does to Christians in time — their calling, conversion, justification, sanctification, and preservation in the faith — to an act of God prior to the creation of the world, that is, in eternity, namely, to their eternal election. Paul confesses 2 Tim. 1:9 in the name of all Christians: "God has saved us and called us out with a holy calling" and then continues: "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the time of the world" (οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἰδίαν προσηγορίαν καὶ χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ προ χρόνων αἰώνιων). Acts 13:48 says of the heathen who came to faith through the apostle's sermon: "They believed, ὅσοι ἦσαν τεταγμένοι εἰς ζῶν αἰῶνιον. Paul addresses 2 Thess. 2:10-12 of those who are lost through the seduction of the Antichrist because they have not embraced the love of the truth. In contrast, Paul thanks God that the Christians of Thessalonica will not have a sad but a blessed end. He gives as a reason for their eternal election: "But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, that God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation in the sanctification of the Spirit and in the faith of the truth, into which (εἰς ὃ) he called you through our gospel to the glorious possession of our Lord Jesus Christ." The whole of the spiritual blessing that is granted to Christians in time, the apostle Eph. 1:3-6 to their eternal election with the words: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heaven through Lord, even as (καθώς) he hath chosen us through him before the foundation of the world" (προ καταβολῆς κόσμου). In Rom. 8:28-30 Paul announces

to the Christians, as far as they are subject to suffering and weakness in time: "To those who love God, everything is for the best, because they find calling according to purpose" (τοῖς κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς οὖν). What resolution (πρόθεσις) this was we need not guess. The apostle immediately describes this resolution in more detail as God's foreknowing (προγινώσκειν; Luther: Foreseeable), which includes in itself the predestination (προορίζειν) to glory (ὅτι οὖς προέγνω καὶ προώρισε συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτόν). But with the predestination to glory three things are inseparably bound: The calling, the justification, and the making glorious (οὖς δὲ προώρισεν, τούτους καὶ ἐκάλεσεν, καὶ οὖς ἐκάλεσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδικαίωσεν; οὖς δὲ ἐδικαίωσεν, τούτους καὶ ἐδόξασεν). Details to be discussed later. Two things should be pointed out here, so that the scriptural concept of eternal election may be held: 1. Eternal election does not extend merely to a part or even only to the final part of the way of salvation (to the granting of salvation after Christians have brought away the end of their faith, *electio intuitu fidei finalis*), but to the whole way of salvation which Christians are led by God, from the calling to the introduction into glory. This concept is also held by the Formula of Concord when it says (706, 8 [[Trigl. 1065, Sol. Decl., XI, 8](#) ]): "The eternal election of God not only sees and knows the salvation of the elect beforehand, but is also a cause of God's gracious will and good pleasure in Jesus Christ, so that our salvation and all that belongs to it is created, worked, helped, and promoted; and our salvation is also based on this, so that the gates of hell will not be able to oppose it, as it is written: 'No one will snatch my sheep out of my hand'. And again: 'And there were believers, as many as were ordained unto eternal life.'" 2. In the doctrine of eternal election, only those who have already abandoned the Christian doctrine of the general way of salvation can stray. Whoever, for instance, thinks that conversion and salvation depend not only on God's grace, but also on self- conditioning, self-decision, right conduct, lesser guilt in comparison with other men, etc., will also teach that God has not only chosen to salvation by grace for Christ's sake, but from eternity in view of the things mentioned (the *aliquid in homine*).

2. The right consideration of eternal election. [^]

As is well known, the doctrine of election is bound up with a great history of suffering. Luther confesses that for him there was a time when the thought of eternal election filled him not with comfort but with horror.¹⁶⁷¹⁾ Many Christians have had the same experience.¹⁶⁷²⁾ This sad effect is contrary to the real nature and divine intention of this doctrine, and is due to the fact that eternal election is not considered rightly, but as it did not happen at all. Election is, to be sure, a singling out and determination of the persons of Christians to salvation, which took place in eternity, 2 Thess. 2:13: εἰλατο υμᾶς ὁ θεός ... εἰς σωτηρίαν. ["God hath from the beginning chosen *you* to salvation."] But this segregation did not happen *nude*, "merely". God — to which it must be pointed out again and again — has not reached among men with his mere omnipotent hand, but this seizing (αἰρεῖσθαι, "choose") has taken place, as 2 Thess. 2:13 is added, was accomplished "in sanctification, of the Spirit, and in the faith of the truth," εν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας, that is, in the way and by the fact that he approached them in the gospel and the Holy Spirit became effective in the gospel and produced faith. In other words: Like Christ's merit, sanctification of the Spirit and faith belong to the eternal election act and not merely to the execution of it, as the Calvinists teach.¹⁶⁷³⁾ We therefore consider our eternal election rightly only when we consider and record how it actually took place in eternity, namely, not without means (absolutely), but through the sermon of the gospel and the efficacy of the Holy Spirit in the gospel for the bringing forth of faith. It took place in eternity as the Formula of Concord describes its execution in time (720, 76 [[Trigl. 1087, Sol. Decl., XI, 76](#) ]): "The Father draws ... by the hearing of his holy divine word as with a net,

1671) [St. L. II, 180](#) reports Luther that he would have almost died in the temptation because of his election, if Staupitz had not saved him from this temptation.




1672) [Luther, St. L. II, 182](#): "Under the papacy there have also been many godly people who have felt these spiritual temptations."



1673) *Formula Consensus Helvetica*, V; in Niemeyer, p. 731 sq.

thereby the elect are snatched out of the devil's jaws." If we hold on to this eternal mode of election, we are pointed to Christ and the gospel by the question of our election, and with that all trouble is over, as is to be explained in more detail in the section on the recognizability of election. All perverse thoughts leading either to despair or to carnal security are completely excluded. If someone asks, "Am I chosen to salvation?" he must answer with the counter-question, "How do you stand on the sanctification of the Spirit and the faith of truth, by which eternal election has come about?" Continues the questioner: "If I am chosen from eternity to salvation, I shall certainly be saved; If I am not chosen, I will perish, whether I hear the gospel and believe or not," he must be told that there is no such eternal election to salvation, that God has not taken his elect by the ears or by the neck, but ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας, by means of sanctification of the Spirit and faith of the truth, in eternity.

This is the point on which the Formula of Concord stresses so emphatically. It is all about securing this right consideration of eternal election. After establishing the concept of the "eternal election of the children of God to eternal salvation" by demarcating it from divine providence (704, 3-8 [[Trigl. 1063, Sol. Decl., XI, 3-8](#) [🔗](#)]), it inculcates it at great length (706, 9-24 [[Trigl. 1065, ibid, 9-24](#) [🔗](#)]) that the election to salvation "is not to be considered merely (*nude*) in the secret, inscrutable counsel of God," "as if such no longer held in itself or belonged to it, nor were more to be considered in it, than that God foreknew (foresaw, *praeviderit*) which and how many should be saved, which and how many should be damned, or that he alone held such muster (*militarem quendam delectum*): This one shall be saved, that one shall be damned; this one shall remain steadfast, that one shall not remain steadfast", but the right consideration of the eternal election happens thus, "that the whole doctrine of the purpose, counsel, will and ordinance of God concerning our salvation, calling, righteousness and saving be summarized (*simul mente complectamur*)". The Formula of Concord then itself summarizes what is necessary for right consideration in eight points. We must consider, it says, that God

has truly reconciled the human race¹⁶⁷⁴⁾ to Himself through Christ, that God presents to us the acquired grace through the means of grace, that the Holy Spirit works faith through such presentation, that God justifies by faith and sanctifies those who are thus justified, not forsaking them even in their weakness and various temptations, but will perfect the work begun until it is made glorious. Having thus placed the general way of salvation under consideration, the Formula of Concord adds that it has hereby described the way or mode in which God "considers all and every person of the elect, who are to be saved through Christ, in grace [for eternity] (*clementer* *praescivit*, translation of προέγνω, Rom. 8:29), saved to salvation, also decreed that in this way, as now reported, he would bring, help, promote, strengthen, and preserve them by his grace, gifts, and effects."

We have an analogy for this in the consideration of the *terminus vitae*. The number of years of each man is determined in God's counsel. Job 14:5: "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." But this truth must not be considered bare manner, *nude*, in the way that someone would not pray or work or eat or use remedies against danger and disease. God has directed us men to the means he has ordained¹⁶⁷⁵⁾ and woven the use of these means into the *terminus vitae* he has established. On the way of the use of these means God leads our life to the *terminus* determined by him. Thus, of course, eternal election is also an unchangeable *factum*, as the Formula of Concord so emphatically testifies (705, 25; 714, 45-47; 715, 54 ff. [(*Trigl.* 1071, *ibid.*, 25 ; 1079, 45—47 ; 1081, 54 ff. ]). But this eternal act of grace is not absolute, but as εν Χριστῳ (Eph. 1:4), so also εν ἀγιασμῳ πνεύματος και πίστει ἀληθείας happened (2 Thess. 2:13), that is, it is based on Christ's merit, and into the act of election itself is woven the use and effect of the means of grace.

1674) The Formula of Concord calls "the human race" or all men, not in order to declare a general election in contradiction with its own explanation (705, 5 [*Trigl.* 1065, *ibid.*, 5 ]), but because we can consider "our redemption" (707, 14 [*Trigl.* 1069, 14 ]) only when we consider that truly the human race is redeemed by Christ. The denial of the general redemption excludes the consideration of our redemption.

1675) Acts 9:25; 23:16 ff; 1 Tim. 5:23 etc.

From our position in Christ and the means of grace we can recognize whether we are eternally chosen, as the Formula of Concord explains in detail (710, 30 ff. [[Trigl. 1073](#), [ibid.](#), [30ff.](#) [🔗](#)]). This is the right consideration of the eternal election.

3. Object of eternal election. [^](#)

The object of election is not all men (doctrine of Samuel Huber, † 1624),¹⁶⁷⁶⁾ nor the saved and the believers for a time only (doctrine of later Tübingen theologians and more recent theologians),¹⁶⁷⁷⁾ but only the saved, because Scripture teaches that all the elect will surely be saved, or, what is the same, that no elect can be lost.¹⁶⁷⁸⁾

1676) *Acta Huberiana*, Tübingen 1597, I, 254: "Bekenntnis Dr. Samuel Huber of the Election of Grace: I believe and confess from the bottom of my heart that God has ordained in his Son all and every man to eternal life, but has passed over all men, one as well as the other." In Frank [IV, 281](#), cf. [L. u. W. 1880, p. 45](#) ff.

1677) Thus the Tübingen J. A. Osiander, † 1697: *Colleg. Theol. Syst.* VI, 117. Cf. the dogma-historical expositions of [L. u. W. 1880, p. 105](#); [1881, p. 100](#) ff. Criticism of the Tübingen theologians by Fecht, *Compend. univ. theol.* p. 426 sq., by Baier-Walther [III, 541](#). Of more recent ones, [Frank, IV, 177 f.](#), also teaches "a twofold order of elect.

1678) Matt. 24:24; Rom. 8:28-30. in the words of Christ Matt. 24:24: ὥστε πλανησαί, εἴ δυνατόν, καὶ τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς denotes a case that does not occur. This explanation is expressly given v. 22: "If those days were not shortened, no man would be saved; but for the elect's sake the days are shortened." That eternal glory is certain for all the elect is also taken by Paul *ex professo* to the Christians Rom. 8:28-30. The making of glory (ἐδόξαωεν aorist) is as inseparably bound up with eternal election as are calling (ἐκάλεσεν) and justification (ἐδικαίωσεν). Cf. Stöckhardt, [Epistle to the Romans, p. 402](#) [[Schade/Stahlke p. 364](#)]. Stöckhardt quotes from White: "In order to put the glorification on the same level of reliability with the προεγνώ, προώρισε, ἐκάλεσε, and ἐδικαίωσε, Paul chose the proleptic aorist." — Those who object that even the believers for a time, as long as they believe, are called and justified, and therefore also to be counted among the elect, have to make this out with Scripture, which refers eternal election only to those who are actually blessed, and does not include the believers for a time. The believers for a time only are also not included in the series of scriptural statements in which the church, the congregation of the saints or Christianity, is identified with the elect: 1 Cor. 1:2-9; Eph. 1:1 ff; 1 Thess. 1:5; 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:1, 2; 2:9 etc. Therefore, it is not necessary to correct Luther's exposition of the third article, when Luther lets "the whole of Christianity on earth" consist of the men whom the Holy Spirit "calls, gathers, enlightens,

The word Election of Grace, therefore, does not have in Scripture a broad, a wider, and a narrower sense (so that in the broadest sense all men would be elected, in the wider sense those who are saved and those who believe for a time, in the narrower sense only those who are saved), but always only one sense: it denotes the eternal act of grace of God upon those who actually attain salvation. The Formula of Concord follows the Scripture exactly, in that it distinguishes from the outset the predestinatio ad salutem from the *praescientia* of God in the exposition of the doctrine of Election of Grace or Predestination, and states that the *praescientia* of God refers to all men, but the *praedestinatio ad salutem* concerns only the blessed children of God. Formula of Concord (705, 5-7 [[Trigl. 1065, *ibid.*, 5-7](#) [↗](#)]): "The eternal election of God *vel praedestinatio*, that is, God's ordinance to salvation, does not apply to the pious and the wicked, but only to the children of God, who were chosen and ordained to eternal life before the foundation of the world was laid, as Paul says in Eph. 1: 'He has chosen us in Jesus Christ and ordained us to adoption. God's providence (*praescientia*) sees and knows beforehand even evil," etc. Of course, there have been Lutheran theologians, especially before the Formula of Concord, who have spoken of a general Election of Grace extending to all men, using the expressions Election of Grace and Will of Grace as synonymous in an imprecise manner of speaking.¹⁶⁷⁹⁾) In the Formula of Concord, however, this imprecise way of speaking is not found. Although it testifies most decidedly against the Calvinists to the generality of the grace of God, the merit of Christ, and the efficacy of the Holy Spirit in the Word,¹⁶⁸⁰⁾ it does not call the Election of Grace a general one, but on the contrary says from the outset that the Election of Grace does not refer only to the children of God who will certainly be saved (705, 5. 8 [[Trigl. 1065, 5, 8](#) [↗](#)]). What has caused a number of theologians in ancient and modern times to ascribe to the Formula of Concord, at least in places, a general or at least extended Election of Grace, is the fact that the Formula of Concord so emphatically inculcates that eternal election is not a bare decree (*nude*), but always only in

sanctifies and keeps with Jesus Christ in the one true faith". God does it like the farmer, who does not count even the wheat that falls off on the way in the harvesting, is trampled or eaten by the birds of the sky.

1679) Quoted in [Frank IV, 282 f.](#)

1680) M. 721, 28 f. [[Trigl. 1071, *ibid.*, 28 ff](#) [↗](#)]; 557, 17-19. [[837, *Epit.*, 17-19](#) [↗](#)]

conjunction with the whole counsel of God "concerning our redemption, calling, justifying and saving". We have shown in the preceding section that the Formula of Concord does this, not in order to teach a general Election of Grace, but in order to secure the scriptural concept and thus the right consideration of eternal election, because eternal election is not accomplished *nude*, but by the work and operation of the Holy Spirit in the means of grace.

As to the determination of the object of the Election of Grace, it is further to be noted that it does not consist in the general principle, "He that believeth to the end shall be saved." This, to be sure, is a principle and decree of God revealed throughout the Scriptures.¹⁶⁸¹ But this principle is not the Election of Grace. According to the Scriptural doctrine of Election of Grace, God has not chosen a principle, but persons; 2 Thess. 2:13: "God has chosen you (*υμᾶς*)"; Eph. 1:4: "God has chosen us (*ἡμᾶς*).". Exactly following Scripture here is again the Formula of Concord (708, 23 [[Trigl. 1069, *ibid.*, 23](#) [↗](#)]): "God in such his counsel, purpose, and ordinance hath not only in general" (in *genere*) "prepared salvation, but hath also in grace provided for all and every person of the elect, who through Christ shall be saved, hath chosen them unto salvation, hath also ordained that in this manner, as now reported" (in the eight points), "by his grace, gifts, and effect he will bring them to it, keep them, promote them, strengthen them, and keep them therein." When modern theologians say that the Election of Grace does not refer to single, certain persons (individuals), but to the Church, this is a contradiction in terms, since the Church consists of single, certain persons, namely of those who believe in Christ.


4. The recognizability of the eternal election. [^](#)

That Christians can recognize their eternal election and be certain of it is so self-evident according to Scripture that Scripture addresses Christians as elect without further ado¹⁶⁸² and

1681) Joh. 3:18. 36; Matt. 24:13 etc.

1682) Eph. 1:4 Paul says, summarizing himself with all Christians: God has chosen us (*εξελέξατο ἡμᾶς*); 2 Thess. 2:13 he tells the Thessalonians: God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation (*εἴλατο υμᾶς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς εἰς σωτηρίαν*); 1 Thess. 1:5: We know your election (*εἰδότες χῆν ἐκλογὴν υμῶν*).

comforts them with the fact of their eternal election.¹⁶⁸³⁾ All those who claim that Christians cannot recognize their eternal election with certainty have a sure sign that their doctrine of election is not the doctrine of Scripture. The cause of the failure to recognize eternal election is multiple.

First of all, the Election of Grace cannot be recognized at all if it is considered from the point of view of divine foreknowledge or foresight, e.g. *intuitu fidei finalis*, because divine foreknowledge is an inscrutable mystery for us men. No Christian is able to know what God foreknew or foresaw concerning his person because there is no divine revelation about it. The theory that God has *ex praevisa fide finali originated* at the study table and has always remained at the study table. No theologian and no Christian has ever had any practical use for this theory. A number of the ancient *intuitu fidei* theologians, however, teach that Christians should and can be certain of their eternal election.¹⁶⁸⁴⁾ They come to this conclusion by letting their theory ride in practice. They point Christians not to God's foreknowledge but to the divine promises that assure preservation in faith. The Formula of Concord, therefore, warns very strongly against the method of taking divine foreknowledge into consideration of eternal election (715, 54 ff. [*Trigl.* 1081, *ibid.*, 54f. ]): "So there is no doubt that God has seen beforehand in all certainty before the time of the world" (*praeviderit*, has seen beforehand) "and still knows which of those who are called will believe or not believe; again, which of the converts will remain steadfast, which will not remain steadfast; which will return after the fall, which will fall into hardening. So also the number, how many there will be on both sides, is conscious and known to God without any doubt. But because God has reserved this mystery to His wisdom and has not revealed it to us in His Word, much less commanded us to investigate it through our thoughts, but has seriously forbidden us to do so, Romans 11, we should not conclude or ponder it with our thoughts.

1683) Rom. 8:28-39. v. 33: "Who will accuse the elect of God?"

1684) Brochmand, *Systema* I, 270 f.; in Baier-Walther [III, 599](#) ff.

but keep us to his revealed word, whereupon he directs us."

On the other hand, the eternal election cannot be recognized if the general grace (*gratia universalis*) is somehow limited. That is why the Formula of Concord says, where it deals with the recognition of eternal election (709, 28 [[Trigl. 1071](#), [ibid.](#), 28 [Q](#)]): "If we want to consider our eternal election useful for salvation, we must hold firm in all ways that, as the sermon of repentance, so also the promise of the Evangelii universalis, that is, goes over all men, Luke 24:47." Man does not feel the necessity of absolutely universal grace as long as the horror of conscience has not yet seized his heart. But in the case of real fear of sin (*terrores conscientiae*), nothing else comforts but grace, which goes to all sinners without limitation, which, as Luther expresses it, means no less the thief than St. Peter, no less the whore than the holy virgin. Universal grace, however, is denied not only by the Calvinists but also by the Synergists. The Calvinists limit the saving grace (*efficacious grace*) to the immediately enlightened and born again. The synergists limit the actually saving grace to the men in whom the right behavior, the self-setting or a lesser guilt is found.

This leads to a third point. The eternal election cannot be recognized at all, if it is considered not as Election of Grace, but from the point of view that it depends on something in man (*aliquid in homine*), no matter if the thing in man is called merit, good works, self-determination, right conduct, lesser guilt or otherwise is called. In this way of looking at things, the concept of eternal election as Election of Grace is abandoned from the outset, and there is an attempt to recognize a thing that does not exist at all. As a rule, therefore, the synergists also deny the recognizability of eternal election. That is consistent. But if someone should really think in his heart that God has accepted him and chosen him to salvation because he has done good or refrained from evil, he would thereby not bear the marks of the elect, but still the marks of the perishing, because eternal election is now ἐκλογή χάριτος (Rom. 11:5). That is why the Lutheran confession warns against the

doctrine, "that not the mercy of God and most holy merit of Christ, but also in us (*aliquid in nobis*) is a cause of God's election" (723, 88 [[Trigl. 1093, ibid., 88](#) [↗](#)]), and therefore it begins the section dealing with the knowability of election with the warning that we should "not judge according to the law" of our election (709, 26 [[Trigl. 1071, ibid., 26](#) [↗](#)]).

On the other hand, the eternal election can be safely recognized from the gospel. The gospel has this content, that the grace of God in Christ concerns all sinners without exception, and that this grace is really grace and not conditioned by anything in man. If a man hears and believes this, he cannot but be assured that for Christ's sake there is no wrath in God's heart, but a great love for him, the sinner. Therefore, if a poor sinner keeps his faith directed to the gospel without side glances at the law, he believes *eo ipso* his eternal election. In short, the knowledge of eternal election coincides with faith in the gospel. This way of knowing the eternal election is taught in the doctrine Rom. 8:32-33: "God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all; how could he not give us all things with him? Who will accuse the elect of God?" It is only from this fact, that the knowledge of eternal election coincides with faith in the gospel, that the other fact is declared, that the Scriptures address those who believe the gospel as elect. Much argumentation, however, does not help at this point. But it is the method taught in Scripture and proven by experience that to hearts bruised and inquiring after grace their election shines forth from the wounds of Christ, as Staupitz taught Luther and Luther counsels every one inquiring after his election. As far as believers only for a time are concerned, they are believers for a time only because they do not believe the gospel, which specifically promises preservation in faith. Luther remarks on the words 1 Pet. 1:2: "According to the providence of God the Father" as follows: "From this we are to take this doctrine that the providence is not based on our worthiness and merit, as the sophists pretend, since the devil could make it uncertain and overturn it at any moment, but it stands in God's hand and is based on His mercy, which is unchanging and eternal; therefore,

it is also called providence, and for this reason it is certain and cannot be lacking. Therefore, if your sin and unworthiness trouble you, and it occurs to you that you are not provided for by God, item, the number of the elect is small, the multitude of the wicked is great, and you are frightened by the horrible examples of divine wrath and judgment, then do not argue long why God does this or that in this way and not otherwise, if he could well do so. Nor do you dare to explore the abyss of divine providence with your reason, otherwise you will certainly be misled by it, either despairing or even striking yourself in the open, but stick to the promise of the Gospel, which will teach you that Christ, the Son of God, has come into the world to bless all peoples on earth, that is, to redeem from sin and death, to make righteous and saved, and that he did this by the command and gracious will of God the heavenly Father, who so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life, John 3:16. If you follow this counsel, namely, recognizing first that you are a child of wrath by nature, guilty of eternal death and damnation, from which no creature, human or angelic, can save you, and then taking hold of God's promise, believe that He is a merciful, true God, who faithfully keeps what he has said out of pure grace, without any action on our part or merit, and has therefore sent Christ, his only Son, to make amends for your sins and to give you his innocence and righteousness, and finally to redeem you from all kinds of misery and death: Doubt not that thou art of the company of the elect. If one acts in such a way, as St. Paul also does, the providence is exceedingly comforting. To him who does it otherwise, it is terrible for him."

The fact that the recognition of eternal election coincides with faith in the gospel also shows the nature of the certainty that Christians have of their eternal election. As is well known, it has been discussed whether the certainty should be called "absolute" or "conditional". But both expressions are ambiguous. Calvinists think of absolute assurance as immediate, not based on the external means of grace. Efficacious grace acts immediately. Synergists think of "conditional" certainty as being


dependent on human behavior. In adequate terms, the certainty is called certainty of faith, because it consists in faith in the gospel and therefore, in accordance with the nature of faith, it is not a half certainty, but a complete certainty. This normal assurance of faith is described in Rom. 8:31-39, which description concludes with the words, "I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principality, nor power, nor things present, nor things to come, nor things high, nor things low, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." The warnings against apostasy and the reference to believers for a time only are completely serious. But they belong to the law and do not apply to Christians according to the new man, insofar as they ask for grace, salvation and election in the knowledge of sin, but according to the old man, insofar as their interest turns away from grace and salvation and toward this world. The concern that the believers for a time only might have believed an untruth, if in the gospel of grace also the preservation in faith is promised and thus also the eternal election is revealed, is unfounded. The supposed case does not occur. Whoever believes God's promise of grace with regard to preservation does not fall away. This is a fact revealed in the Scriptures.¹⁶⁸⁵⁾

5. The relationship of faith to eternal election. ^

The fact that we are dealing with the relationship of faith to eternal election in a special section is justified by the fact that this point has been the subject of dispute from the end of the sixteenth century until our own time. We must distinguish between the relationship in which the faith of Christians stands to their eternal election, and the relationship which the Scriptures assign to faith which Christians have in time.

As far as the relationship of faith to eternal election is concerned, faith is neither to be placed before nor after election. At this point, both the later Lutherans and the Calvinists stray from the truth. The later Lutherans conceptually place faith before eternal election, claiming that God chose the persons

1685) Rom. 10:11: πας ὁ πιστεῶν ἐπ' αὐτοῦ, οὐ καταιογνῆθῃται. ["Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed"]

whom he had foreseen that they would remain in faith until the end (election intuitu fidei finalis). Calvinists place faith behind the eternal election by claiming that, like Christ's merit, faith belongs only to the execution of the absolute election.¹⁶⁸⁶⁾ On the other hand, with regard to the relationship of the faith of Christians to their eternal election, it should be noted that their eternal election consists precisely in the fact that God has provided them with faith in the gospel and has thereby taken them out of the world. In other words, faith wrought by the Holy Spirit is the means of election. The eternal election did not take place absolutely or *nude*, but ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας "in sanctification of the Spirit and in faith of the truth." This has already been stated under the section "Concept of Eternal Election." ¶ Thus also the Formula of Concord (714, 44 [*Trigl.* 1077, *ibid.*, 44 ) teaches: "God in his counsel before the time of the world" (i.e., in the eternal election itself) "considered and decreed that he would create and work in us all things that pertain to our conversion" (that is, to our becoming believers) "himself by the power of his Holy Spirit through the Word." Thus Walther also wrote:¹⁶⁸⁷⁾ "We teach that God, just as in time he made us saved through faith, has decided in eternity to make the elect saved through faith, and this, according to the Word of God, the confession and our doctrine, is the council of grace. ... The Calvinists teach an absolute election to salvation, and after this election has already taken place, God now decides to give faith alone to the elect. We, on the other hand, believe, teach, and confess according to Scripture and our confession that God has elected to salvation by faith."

But as for the faith which the elect have in time, it is, like all their temporal state of grace, a

1686) *Formula Consensus Helvetica*, can. 5; in Niemeyer, p. 731 sq.

1687) Correction etc., p. 147. Lünemann (in Meyer's Commentary): "Ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας belongs neither alone to σωτηρίαν nor alone to εἴλωτο, but to the total term εἴλωτο εἰς σωτηρίαν, and indicates the means by which the election which had taken place was to be realized." The latter is not exact. The words of the text do not say how "the election that happened was to be realized," but how the eternal election was realized, was consummated (εἴλωτο).

consequence and effect of their eternal election, 2 Tim. 1:9: "God has saved us and called us ... according to His purpose and grace, which was given us in Jesus Christ before the world began"; Acts 13:48: "As many as were ordained unto eternal life believed." Thus the Formula of Concord (706, 8 [[Trigl. 1065](#), [ibid.](#), 8 [Q](#)]): "The eternal election of God ... is of God's gracious will and good pleasure in Jesus Christ a cause, so that our salvation, and that which belongs to it, creates, works, helps and promotes, on which also our salvation is thus founded, so that even the gates of hell shall not be able to oppose it, as it stands, 'My sheep shall no man pluck out of my hand.' And again: 'And there were believers, as many as were ordained unto eternal life.'" Likewise Chemnitz: "The election of God follows not after our faith and righteousness, but goes before as a cause of it all."
1688)

The later Lutheran theologians, especially since Ägidius Hunnius († 1603), deviated from this doctrine. They let the faith, namely the faith held until the end or still occurring before the end (*fidem finalem*), precede the eternal election conceptually ([notionaliter](#), [in signo rationis](#)), by teaching that God had chosen from eternity the men of whom he had foreseen that they had remained in faith until the end or would still come to faith before their end ([electio intuitu fidei finalis](#), [ex praevisa fide finali](#)). They sought to gain scriptural proof by grasping Rom. 8:29 the προγινώσκειν (foreknowledge) in the sense of knowing beforehand or seeing beforehand ([nudam scientiam denotans](#)). But in order to escape the assumption that all men were elect—because God's foreknowledge extends to all men—they had to seek to gain a limitation for the statement, "Whom He did foreknow, did foresee." They gained this limitation by making a change in the object of the sentence. They dropped the object "which" (οὗς) and substituted for it: "which persevering faith he saw before or knew before" (*quorum fidem finalem praescivit sive praevideit* [[Google](#)] ["whose constant faith He foresaw or foreknew"]). So also by more recent Lutheran theologians, e.g., also Philippi. In order to excuse, resp. to justify this change of object, Philippi says, one must nevertheless consider the "whom" (οὗς) as

1688) Enchiridion (Milwaukee, Wis.), p. 109. In [Frank IV, 336](#).

"generally suitable" for eternal election, and as such necessary quality, preceding election, he thinks of "persevering πίστις (faith)." But Scripture nowhere says that the "persevering faith" of Christians is the prerequisite for their eternal election. Rather, Scripture says the opposite. That Christians have faith in time and persevere in faith even in extreme tribulation is, according to Scripture, not a prerequisite but a consequence and effect of their election, Acts 13:48; Matt. 24:21. 22. Thus Philippi's alloecsis, which he allows himself with regard to the object "whom", is not only arbitrary, but also contrary to Scripture. And because arbitrariness prevails in this alloecsis, others substitute for "faith" good works,¹⁶⁸⁹⁾ still others love,¹⁶⁹⁰⁾ the synergists, according to the processes of the later Melanchthon, human good behavior under various names: facultas se applicandi ad gratiam, voluntas non repugnans, sed assentiens, self-decision, free self-determination, cessation of willful reluctance, lesser guilt, and so on. In order to avoid these arbitrary and contrary to Scripture additions, and at the same time to let the object "whom" (οὗς) stand as it reads, we take with Luther, the Formula of Concord, and a number of the more recent theologians "to know beforehand," προγινώσκειν, as a synonymum of "to choose," though it does not conceptually coincide with "to choose." Luther translates οὗς προέγνω: "which he provided beforehand." The Formula of Concord renders "zuvorerkennen" as "in Gnaden bedenken" ["in grace considered"]; Latin: clementer praescire, "gnädiglich zuvor wissen," Luthardt describes it as "an appropriating foreknowing." Others more recently render it as: to make one's own, to bind. ¶ This meaning is fully secured by the usage of Scripture. In Scripture προγινώσκειν, like the simplex γινώσκειν and the Hebrew נָחַם [HEBREW: Genesis 4:1], denotes not merely a knowledge of something,¹⁶⁹¹⁾ but also such a taking note, whereby a communal relation, a

1689) So already Ambrosius to Rom. 3:29: *Non ante praedestinavit, quam praesciret, sed quorum merita praescivit, eorum praemia praedestinavit.* [Google] Baier-Walther III, 556.

1690) White, Ebrard.

1691) So is προγινώσκειν however Acts 26:5 and 2 Pet. 3:17 used where men stand in the subject.

connecting with things or persons, a grasping of the same is established.¹⁶⁹²⁾ Some examples put this beyond doubt. As it is said in Deut. 7:6 is said of God's doing to the people of Israel: "You God has chosen (בָּחַר [HEBREW]) to be the people of ownership out of all peoples," so Amos 3:2 is said of the same thing: "Only you have I known (יָדַע [HEBREW]) out of all the generations of the earth." In this meaning stand γινώσκειν, יָדַע [HEBREW] and προγινώσκειν Gal. 4:9; Ps. 1:6; Rom. 11:2. Mere knowledge is excluded in these passages. Gal. 4:9 says of the heathen that in their conversion and through their conversion they were "known of God (γνωσθέντες νπ' αὐτον). Object of the mere knowledge of God were the heathen also before their conversion. Pastor 1:6 says of the way of the righteousness that God knows it. That this means that God takes care of the way of the righteousness is evident from the contrast: "But the way of the wicked perishes." Also in the words Rom. 11:2, "God hath not cast away his people whom he knew before" (προέγνω), every reason for not casting them away would be lacking, if we were to understand προγινώσκειν of mere knowing, and not of accepting, choosing. Now, by allowing this assured meaning of προγινώσκειν: to know beforehand, to assume beforehand, to anticipate beforehand to hold good, we are above any change of object, and are not placed in the awkward position of looking around for a "suitable" object for προέγνω (faith, conduct, self-determination, love, works), but let οὗς, "whom," stand as an object without any change or addition. It is then expressed the thought not only fitting into the context, but also demanded by the context: "Whom God foreknew," that is, accepted as His own, He also predestined to participate in the glory of His Son. That eternal election includes predestination to eternal glory — this is precisely the comfort the apostle wants to give to Christians groaning here on earth under suffering and weakness. On the other hand, the version of the προγινώσκειν of divine foreknowledge is entirely excluded by the context. All admit that the apostle's intention in this passage is to make the suffering Christians certain of their participation in the glory of Christ.

 1692) The ancients say: *Nosse cum affectu et effectu*, that is, a cognition, which does not merely denote a knowledge of something, but includes a loving appropriation of the object and an effect on it.

But if the divine "foreknowledge" is understood as divine prescience, then the apostle would base the certain participation in the glory of Christ on a factor that is completely uncertain to Christians, because no Christian knows nor can know what God has known in him or of him beforehand.

Not valid is the objection, raised in ancient and modern times, that a tautology would result if προγινώσκειν were placed in the series of terms describing election. There would then come out — so it is thought — the sentence, " Whom He foreordained, them He also foreordained." So also Philippi with calling on Hunnius. To this it is to be said: This objection belongs to the thought products, which perpetuate themselves thoughtlessly from generation to generation. Even if in the prefix and the suffix the same word "decreed before" (προορίζειν) were used, so that it would be said: "Those whom he decreed before, he also decreed before", still no tautology would come out, but the best progress of thought, because the suffix: "those whom he also decreed before" has with it the objective: "that they should be like the image of his Son". It would then be stated that the predestination to the glory of the Son of God is binding with the predestination. No one could call this statement a tautology. But to this must be added that προγινώσκειν and προορίζειν, although they serve to describe one and the same divine action, are nevertheless conceptually distinct. "Which he knew beforehand," expresses the loving appropriation or acceptance of the object on the part of God. The epilogue, "whom he also determined beforehand," και προώρωεν, points to a goal-determination connected with the "knowing beforehand," which goal-determination is also immediately added in the words: "that they should be like unto the image of His Son," οὐμμόρφους (predicate accusative) τῆς εἰκόνης τοῦ νῑου αὐτοῦ.

The doctrine of an eternal election *intuitu fidei finalis* has no support in Scripture. If we ask why the later Lutheran teachers carried this doctrine into the Scriptures and deviated from the doctrine of Luther and the Formula of Concord, we must say that they unconsciously or consciously endeavored to declare for human understanding why, with the universal grace of God and the same total ruin of men, there was not

all men converted and saved or that the Election of Grace is not "universal". But also for this explanation the *intuitu fidei finalis* theory is not suitable, as long as one remains with the Christian doctrine of the origin and preservation of faith, namely with the doctrine that faith in *solidum* is an effect of the Holy Spirit. Only with synergistic underpinnings does the theory offer the explanation sought.¹⁶⁹³ If, of course, one takes faith and remaining in faith out of God's hand of grace and places it decisively in man's hand, namely in man's self-determination, right conduct, lesser guilt, etc., then one has gained an explanation, but an explanation contrary to Scripture. It is the explanation of which Luther says against Erasmus: *lugulum meum petisti*. ["You have seized me by the throat"]

6. The purpose of the doctrine of eternal election. ^

Scripture instructs us about the purpose of the doctrine of eternal election in great detail and in very certain terms. This doctrine is not intended to negate or limit the *universalis gratia*, as many before and after Calvin have thought,¹⁶⁹⁴ but to confirm and emphatically inculcate the *sola gratia*. Christians, when comparing themselves with non-Christians, should not think that God has accepted them among his people in consideration of their "different behavior," their better conduct or their lesser guilt, etc., but it should remain present to Christians in all circumstances and at all times that, compared with unbelievers, they also behave badly and are in the same debt before God, as much as depends on them. If they were to accept the contrary, they would be eliminated from Christendom, the kingdom of grace, and would be confined

1693) This is also stated by Frank (*Theol. der Konkordienf. IV, 206*): "The later" (i.e. among the later Lutheran theologians) "popular theological means of information of a *praevisa fides* in connection with the *voluntas Dei antecedens* and *consequens* does not want to catch, it seems, because, on the one hand, faith itself is to be regarded as an effect of grace ... and because, on the other hand, the confession does not make use of that means of information at any point."

1694) Cf. the detailed historical presentation of this contrast under the sections "general" and "serious" grace, II, 21 ff.; furthermore: "Terminology in relation to God's will of grace", where it is also proven that Luther and Calvin only agree in certain expressions, but completely differ in the matter, II, 36-55.

to the kingdom of the Pharisees, which is under the curse.¹⁶⁹⁵⁾ This is the intention of the doctrine of Election of Grace revealed in the Scriptures.

So already in the type of Election of Grace, namely in the election of Israel to the covenant people. If one reads Deut. 9:4 ff., one gets the impression as if Moses in his address to the people of the Jews could not find words enough to take away the delusion of the people that they come to Canaan because they are better in comparison with the heathen. It says: "If therefore the Lord thy God hath driven them [the heathen] out from before thee, say not in thine heart, The Lord hath brought me in to possess this land for my righteousness' sake: for the Lord hath driven out these heathen from before thee for their ungodliness. For thou camest not in to possess their land for thy righteousness and uprightness of heart: but the Lord thy God doth drive out these heathen for their ungodliness, to keep the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Know therefore that the Lord thy God giveth thee not to possess this good land for thy righteousness' sake, because thou art a stiff-necked people." The doctrine of election to salvation has the same purpose. It is as if here, too, the Holy Spirit could not find words enough to impress upon Christians the truth that they owe their acceptance to salvation not to any betterment on their part, but only to the grace of God in Christ. 2 Tim. 1:9: not κατά τά έργα ημών, but κατά ιδίαν πρό&εσιν και χάριν την δοῦ-εἶσαν ἡμῖν εν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ προ χρόνων αιωνίων. Eph. 1:5-6: κατά την ευδοκίαν του θελήματος αντον εις ἐπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αντον. Rom. 11:6.: εἰ δε χάριτι, ουκέτι εξ ἐργων. From this scopus — the affirmation of sola gratia. — chapters 9-11 of the Epistle to the Romans are also rightly understood. These chapters are not directed against general grace—the apostle teaches general grace very emphatically even in these chapters, chs. 10:21; 11:32—but these chapters are characterized throughout as a polemic against the delusion of one's own righteousness and of being better than others.¹⁶⁹⁶⁾

1695) Luke 18:9 ff; Gal 3:10.

1696) See also the summary ch. 9:30-33 and the further exposition ch. 10:1-13, then also the polemic against the Gentile Christians, insofar as they ascribe to themselves a being better than the Jews, ch. 11:18 ff.

The Lutheran Confessions also confirm *sola gratia* as the purpose of the doctrine of election. Formula of Concord (713, 43. 44) [[Trigl. 1077](#), [ibid.](#), [43ff.](#) [🔗](#)]: "It confirms most powerfully the article that we are saved and justified without all our works and merit, purely by grace, for Christ's sake alone. For before the time of the world, before we were, even before the foundation of the world was laid, since we could do no good, we were chosen by grace in Christ according to God's purpose for salvation, Rom. 9; 2 Tim. 1. By this also all *opiniones* and erroneous doctrines of the powers of our natural will are put down, because God in His counsel before the time of the world considered and decreed that He Himself would create and work in us all things pertaining to our conversion by the power of His Holy Spirit through the Word." Likewise 723, 87. 88 [[Trigl. 1091](#), [ibid.](#), [87 f.](#) [🔗](#)]: "By this doctrine and explanation of the eternal and saving election of the elect children of God, God is given His glory wholly and completely, that out of pure mercy in Christ, without any merit or good works on our part, He makes us blessed according to the purpose of His will, as it is written Eph. 1: 'He hath ordained us to filial adoption unto himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glory and grace, whereby he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.' Therefore it is false and wrong when it is taught that not only the mercy of God and [the] most holy merit of Christ, but also in us is a cause of God's election, for whose sake God has chosen us to eternal life. For not only before we do any good, but also before we are born, hath he chosen us in Christ, even before the foundation of the world was taken: and 'that the purpose of God might be according to election, it was said unto him, not of the merit of works, but of the grace of the caller; that he which is greatest should serve that which is least'. As it is written: 'I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau. Rom. 9:11 ff.; Gen. 25:23; Mal. 1:2 f.."

In the confirmation of *sola gratia* by the doctrine of eternal election, there is also a reason why this doctrine is terrible to some and comforting to others. To all those who think that they are not like other people, who still find on their side their own virtue and ability: *semina virtutum*, at least *facultas se applicandi ad gratiam*, different conduct, a lesser guilt, etc. — to all these the

Scriptural doctrine of the Election of Grace, because it destroys their whole religion, to which they count the "self-determination that is inseparable from the human being".¹⁶⁹⁷⁾ On the other hand, the Scriptural doctrine of the Election of Grace, because it so powerfully confirms *sola gratia*, is very comforting to all those who have been "smitten into heaps" by the thunderbolt of the law, have come to despair of themselves, and see the only salvation in pure, free grace. "There is" — says the Formula of Concord (714, 45-49 [[Trigl. 1079, ibid., 45 ff.](#) [🔗](#)]) — "the beautiful, glorious consolation that God has made every Christian's conversion, righteousness, and salvation so dear to him and so faithfully meant it that, before the foundation of the world was taken, he held counsel about it and decreed in his purpose how he would bring me to it and preserve me in it; Again, that he had so well and certainly purposed to save my salvation, because it might easily be lost by the weakness and wickedness of our flesh out of our hands, or snatched and taken away by the cunning and power of the devil and the world, that in his eternal purpose, which cannot fail or be overthrown, he has decreed and taken it into the almighty hand of our Savior Jesus Christ, out of which no one can snatch us, John. 10, wherefore also Paul saith Rom. 8, Because we are called according to the purpose of God, who then will separate us from the love of God in Christ?" Thus, individual Christians see in the Election of Grace, because it is a confirmation of *sola gratia*, a great comfort in their weakness and in their temptations.

Furthermore: Because it looks at times as if the Christian church on earth has come to an end, we should also find in the Election of Grace a guarantee for the existence of a Christian church under all circumstances. This, too, the Scriptures teach as the purpose of eternal election. When Elijah, in his pessimism, came before God and lamented, "Lord, I alone am left," God instructed him that there were still seven thousand left as the effect of election, Rom. 11:7: ἡ ἐκλογή (*abstractum pro concreto*) ἐπέτυχεν, "election has obtained it." When in the last time the affliction grows to a climax, God shortens

1697) Recently, Dr. Schmidt in [Distinctive Doctrines⁴](#), p. 230, advocates again with great determination that the man inspired by grace has "an option between obeying the call and yielding to the saving influences of God's Spirit, on the one hand, and between refusing to do so, on the other hand".

for the sake of the elect, the days of tribulation, Matt. 24:22. So also the Formula of Concord (716, 50 [[Trigl. 1079, ibid., 50](#) [🔗](#)]): "There is also this article a glorious testimony, that the church of God shall be and remain against all the gates of hell." Eternal election stands in causal relation to the Christian church.

All those who make something inherent in man (*aliquid in homine*) the cause or occasion of eternal election, whether this be a whole or half human achievement, the "inalienable" human self-determination or something similar, turn the purpose of the revelation of the doctrine of eternal election into the exact opposite. They turn the doctrine that is supposed to confirm and glorify God's grace¹⁶⁹⁸) into a doctrine that actually confirms and glorifies human virtue and good behavior, that takes salvation from God's hand of grace and places it in man's hand, that makes grace and salvation not certain but uncertain, that makes the Christian church move away from its foundation — *sola gratia*. We must not forget that as long as someone still believes in his heart and before God that a cause or reason for eternal election lies in himself, he still bears the marks of the lost, as Paul also reproached the Gentile Christians when they forgot the "There is no difference here" and wanted to rise above the unbelieving Jews.¹⁶⁹⁹)

To the purpose of the doctrine of eternal election belongs finally also an admonition and warning, which all Christians need very much according to their flesh. Because the eternal election did not take place in a bare manner (*nude*), but in the sanctification of the Spirit and in the faith of truth, all Christians are powerfully admonished by the doctrine of eternal election that they will be found in the way in which their election took place in eternity. To this admonition Christ uses eternal election when, after describing the way of salvation, he says: "Many are called, but few are chosen." The same purpose is served by the exhortation addressed to Christians to establish their calling and election.¹⁷⁰⁰) The chosen ones wear

1698) Eph. 1:6: εἰς ἐπαινον τῆς δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ, ἧς ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς ἐν τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ.

1699) Rom. 11:18-22.

1700) 2 Pet. 1:10. Cf. Luther's disputation on Luke 7:47. [St. L. VII, 1461, Thesis 57.](#)

this garment in their temporal appearance: "hear the gospel, believe in Christ, pray and give thanks, are sanctified in love, have hope, patience and comfort in the cross. Rom. 8. And though all these things be very weak in them, yet they hunger and thirst after righteousness." The Formula of Concord also emphasizes the exhortatory purpose of the doctrine of eternal election in the words (715, 51 [[Trigl.](#), [1079](#), [ibid.](#), [51](#) [↗](#)]): "Mighty admonitions and warnings are also heard from this article, as Luke 7:30: 'They despised God's counsel against themselves'; Luke 14:24: 'I tell you that none of these men will taste my supper'; again: 'Many are called, but few are chosen'."

7. There is no election of wrath or predestination to damnation. [^](#)

The Calvinist Reformed maintain very firmly that wrath election of wrath or predestination to damnation is the "necessary reverse" of election to salvation. Calvin titles the chapter in which he begins to treat eternal election, *De electione aeterna, qua Deus alios ad salutem, alios ad interitum, praedestinavit*,¹⁷⁰¹⁾ and Reformed old and new strike a superior tone toward those who teach election to salvation but reject predestination to damnation. Calvin chides them with harsh and coarse words. He calls the rejection of predestination to damnation "*inscite nimis et pueriliter*," *plus quam insulse*."¹⁷⁰²⁾ Hodge and Shedd speak more politely, but still agree in denying theological *raison d'être* to Lutherans who reject predestination to damnation while teaching election to salvation. Shedd divides all Christianity on earth into two classes of people, Calvinists (deniers of *universalis gratia*) and Arminians (deniers of *sola gratia*).¹⁷⁰³⁾ There is no place left in the church for Lutherans in this division. The position of the Formula of Concord is called ""untenable ground."¹⁷⁰⁴⁾

But that "necessary reverse" is merely a human invention. The scripture makes a big line through the supposedly so necessary flip side. As clearly and decisively as Scripture

1701) *Inst.* III, 21. 1702) *Inst.* III, 23, 1.


1703) *Dogmatic Theol.*, I, 448.

1704) So also Hodge, *Syst. Theol.*, II, 325.


teaches that Christians owe their entire Christianity in time and especially also their faith to their eternal election, as we have seen, Scripture so decisively rejects the idea that the unbelief of the lost is due to predestination to damnation. This is especially clear when we compare Acts 13 and compare verses 48 and 46. In v. 48 the faith of the believing heathen is traced back to their eternal election: "There believed as many of them as were ordained unto eternal life." But the unbelief of the Jews who remained unbelieving is not traced to a predestination to unbelief and damnation, but from their resistance to God's earnest and effectual will of grace: "Because ye cast it [the Word of God] from you (*απωθεϊσθε*), and regard yourselves not worthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles." Further, the "necessary reverse" is completely obliterated even in those passages of Scripture which testify that both the saving grace of God and Christ's merit and the Holy Spirit's efficacy directed toward conversion extend also to the lost. The scriptural statements that belong here have already been cited and discussed.¹⁷⁰⁵⁾ Also the scriptural doctrine of hardening does not prove an election of wrath or a passing by with grace (*praeteritio*), but the opposite. To be sure, hardening is an act of God's wrath. But it does not take place absolutely, but *εἰς ἀνταπόδομα* (Rom. 11:9), for retribution, that is, on the ground of human resistance to God's word and will and to God's visitation of grace. This was stated under the section "Earnest Grace."¹⁷⁰⁶⁾ Calvin also appeals to 1 Cor. 4:7 for his proposition that God created (*creavit*) those who are lost to shame and ruin and therefore either does not give them his Word or yet does not want to make them saved through the Word: "Who preferred you (*τις σε διακρίνει*)? But what have you that you have not received?"¹⁷⁰⁷⁾ To this it is to be said" Admittedly, Christians recognize a preference in the fact that they have the Word of God, while other men do not. They also recognize a merit in the fact that they believe the Word while others do not. They recognize this as an advantage

1705) Cf. the detailed exposition [II, 21-32](#).

1706) [II, 32 f.](#) and the notes 86-88. 1707) *Inst.* III, 24, 12.

from the point of view that they are in the same guilt and also behave evil against God's Word and therefore, compared with the perishing *et quam simillimi deprehensi*, "learn the more diligently to recognize and praise God's pure, unmerited grace in the vessels of mercy," as the Formula of Concord (717, 60 [*Trigl.* 1083, *ibid.*, 60 not pass by the vessels of wrath, the perishing ones, with his grace and with his salvation, but very earnestly seeks to enter in with them. We already saw this clearly in the unbelieving Jews, Acts 13:48, who rejected the Word of God, which also offered them grace and salvation, and did not consider themselves worthy of eternal life in contrast to the intention of God. The same is evident from the words with which Stephen reveals the state of affairs to the stiff-necked Jews: "Ye always resist (ἀντιπύπτετε) the Holy Spirit, as your fathers did, so do ye." The "resisting" (ἀντιπύπτειν, to attack against) presupposes an urging and invading efficacy of the Holy Spirit. In short, according to the doctrine of Scripture, God prefers those who are actually blessed in such a way that in doing so He does not neglect those who are actually lost with His grace, does not pass them by with His efficacy directed toward conversion. The same can be seen in the passage Rom. 9:22-23, where the apostle places the "vessels of wrath" and the "vessels of mercy" next to each other. When it is said here in reference to the vessels of wrath that God bore them "in great patience" (εν πολλή μακροθυμία, in much longsuffering), this expresses the fact that God also wanted to convert them and make them saved.¹⁷⁰⁸⁾ Looking at the

1708) Stöckhardt says very correctly on this passage [*p.* 457; *Schade handwritten p. 344 top*]: "God has carried the vessels of wrath in great longsuffering before the execution of His wrath. By this is not only meant, as e.g. Hofmann wills, that God deferred wrath and punishment. 'A mere *prolongatio irae*, which delays the judgment of punishment, is not longsuffering.' White. The μακροθυμία of God always has for its purpose the repentance and correction of sinners. God is patient with us, μακροθυμεῖ εἰς ἡμᾶς, not willing that any should perish, but that every man should turn to repentance.' 2 Pet. 3:9. ... We have shown above that the judgment of hardening, which entails the final wrath, is the fault of man, and always has man's self-hardening as its prerequisite. God first offered grace to those whom he ultimately hardened and condemned and


passage Rom. 9:22-23 more closely, it is clear that the election to salvation does not have the predestination to damnation as its reverse side. In two respects the vessels of wrath are quite different from the vessels of mercy. First, while it is said of the vessels of mercy that God prepared them for glory beforehand, it is said of the vessels of wrath in passive construction: κατηρτισμένα εις απώλειαν, prepared, made (fitted) for destruction. The passive construction is not to be regarded as accidental, but as chosen, because here the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy are juxtaposed. The more clearly by the "which he prepared beforehand" (ἃ προητοίμασεν) God's doing of the vessels of mercy is emphasized, the more it leaps into view that in regard to the vessels of wrath, inasmuch as they are κατηρτισμένα εις απώλειαν, God's doing is not thought of at all. Thus by the passive, however, it is expressed that preparing for glory and preparing for destruction are not on the same line. The preparation for destruction is not traced back to God. The Formula of Concord (721, 79. 80 [[Trigl 1089, 79f.](#) ) also points to this in connection with our passage: "Thus the apostle distinguishes with special diligence the work of God, who alone makes vessels of honor, and the work of the devil and of man, who by inspiration of the devil, and not of God, has made himself a vessel of dishonor. For thus it stands written, Rom. 9: 'God hath with great patience borne the vessels of wrath prepared unto condemnation, that he might shew the riches of his glory in the vessels of mercy which he hath prepared unto salvation.' Since the apostle clearly says that God bore the vessels of wrath with great patience, he does not say that he made them vessels of wrath, for if it had been his will, he would not have needed great patience to do so. But that they are ready for damnation, for this the devil and men themselves, and not God, are to blame." ¶ Secondly, while by the προ- (afore) in προητοίμασεν the preparation of the vessels of mercy is referred back to the

earnestly wanted to save them, but they were unwilling. And now Paul emphasizes in our place that God has been patient and longsuffering toward the vessels of wrath, that he has provoked and enticed them not only once, but repeatedly, to repent and be converted. Indeed, God still bore the vessels of wrath in great patience when they were already fitted for destruction."

eternity, the *προ-* is missing before the *κατηρτισμένα εις ἀπώλειαν*, thus with respect to the being ready of the vessels of wrath. Here, therefore, is taught an eternal readiness for glory or for salvation, but not an eternal readiness for destruction.¹⁷⁰⁹⁾ Bengel rightly refers to Matt. 25:34, compared to v. 41, and to Acts 13:48, compared with v. 46. In the latter place the faith of the heathen is traced back to the eternal election, but not the unbelief of the Jews is presented as a consequence and effect of their predestination to damnation, but as a consequence and effect of their resistance to God's will and work of grace. In the first place, Christ says of the kingdom of salvation that it was prepared for the blessed of the Father from the beginning of the world, that is, from the very beginning. In contrast, Christ says of the hellish fire that it was prepared for the devil and his angels. When men go to hell, they go to a place that was not originally prepared for them. "Hell was originally not built for men."

Against this fact it was and is objected that one cannot speak of an original and later intention in the eternal and unchangeable God. We know this very well. But the God in whom there is no *prius* and no *posterius*, and who is not determined by anything from outside, that is God in his majesty unknowable to us men. Therefore, God, because he wants to be known by us men, became man, as in Christ, so also in the Scriptures, as Luther so often reminds us. We must look to the revelation of God in Christ and in the Scriptures alone if we want to have a salutary knowledge of God. And Christ Himself presents the matter of Joh. 3:17-18 in such a way that God's first intention is to make all men saved, and His second intention is to condemn those who have not believed in the name of the only begotten Son. It is folly and foolish wisdom to include here the eternal, unchanging God, not determined or conditioned by anything from outside. Scripture points to this majestic God when it says, for example, Rom. 11:36: "From Him and through Him and to Him are all things." But at the same time we see from the context of this passage that herewith a truth is expressed which lies beyond the human horizon ("For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counselor?")


1709) Cf. the entire execution in Stöckhardt, Römerbrief, p. 432 ff. [Ed. — Schade/Stahlke p. 325 ff.

and which is to establish the fact that there are judgments and ways in God which we men cannot in this life explain, that is, comprehend and explore (ἀνεξερπννῆτα τὰ κρίματα αὐτῶν καὶ ἀνεξιχνίαστοι αἱ οδοὶ αὐτῶν). But we have treated this subject earlier under the section "Terminology in Relation to the Will of God for Grace" and then again under the question of the "Re-tuning of God".¹⁷¹⁰⁾ — Further, as to the proof of the election of wrath or *praeteritio*, it was and is said, "There must nevertheless be an eternal predestination to damnation in view of the historical fact that so many nations have not had the gospel, and in view of the fact that out of a hundred hearers who are in the same utter ruin, only about twenty per cent are converted."¹⁷¹¹⁾ And more recent Calvinists say, "The *result* is the interpretation of the purposes of God." On the other hand, it should be noted that God wants His will toward us men to be judged according to His revealed Word, according to which His grace is universal, and not according to His historical activity with peoples and individuals. It is precisely this historical activity of God, that one people has the gospel and others do not, and that with the same guilt of those who have the word, some are converted and others are not — this is what Scripture counts as the incomprehensible judgments and inexplicable ways of God for us men, Romans 11:33-36. Calvin and his followers commit the folly of wanting to draw a doctrine from historical facts which, according to the express statement of Scripture, are incomprehensible and inscrutable to us men, namely predestination to damnation. They pretend to a knowledge which they do not have at all. And as for the Formula of Concord, it does not occupy "untenable ground," but its doctrinal position is taken from God's revealed Word when it (716, 57 ff. [[Trigl. 1081, *ibid.*, 57-63](#) ) says: "When we see that God gives His Word in one place, does not give it in another, takes it away from one place, lets it remain in another; again, one is made obdurate, blinded, given in a perverse sense, another, as well in the same guilt, is converted again, etc.: in these and such questions Paul sets for us a certain goal how far we are to go, namely, that in one part we are to recognize God's judgment; for they are well-deserved

1710) [II, 36-55](#); [II, 438, note 1041](#). 1711) Calvin, *Inst.* III, 24, 12.

punishments of sins, when God punishes the contempt of his word in a country or people in such a way that it also passes over the descendants, as can be seen in the Jews, by which God shows his seriousness to his own in some countries and people, which we all well deserve, are worthy of and worth, because we behave badly against God's word and often grieve the Holy Spirit, that we may live in the fear of God, and know and praise God's goodness without and against our merit in and with us, to whom he gives his word, and leaves those whom he does not harden and reject. ... If we walk thus far (*eo usque*) in this article, we remain on the right course, as it is written Hos. 13: 'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in Me is thine help.' But what in this disputation wants to run too high and out of these barriers (*extra hos limites*), there we are to take the finger with Paul on the mouth, remember and say, 'O man, who art thou that repliest against God?'"

Also the words of Rom. 9:18: "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth" are wrongly used as proof for a predestination to damnation. They do not mean that there is no mercy in God's heart towards a part of men, namely against those who perish. The apostle explicitly says the opposite in Ch. 11:32: "God has chosen all among the unbelievers, that he might have mercy on all", and the apostle does not think of this mercy as a "will of complacency", that is, as a will without intention to follow the will, because he lets God thus speak in Ch. 10:21: "All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people" (προς λαόν απειθούντο και ἀντιλέγοντα). Yet pay attention to the scope of the text. The words in Rom. 9:18: "God has mercy on whom He wills, and reproves whom He wills" are not directed against the general grace of God, but against works righteousness, that is, against the human delusion of being able to obtain something before God by works, and against the pride resulting from this, which makes claims before God. This intention of the words is clear from the whole preceding and following context, especially from the words: " I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So, then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. " One more thing should be pointed out about Rom. 9:18

to redeem this passage from the exegetical ordeal. One declares oneself quite generally ready to let the sentence stand: "He who is saved is saved by grace alone; he who is lost is lost through his own fault." Now the words that God, according to His will, has mercy and is hardened, do not go beyond the content of the sentence that is to be accepted. It is to be noted, however, as a clear teaching of Scripture, that those who are lost are lost not from a lack of grace, but merely through their own fault on account of their evil conduct against God's Word and effect of grace, as we have proved. But if besides this the equally clearly revealed doctrine is held that those who are saved are in the same guilt and also behave evil, then this is the matter which Paul describes with the words: "He therefore has mercy on those whom he wills, and casts out those whom he wills." The Formula of Concord expresses this (717, 61 [[Trigl. 1088](#), [ibid.](#), [61](#) ]) thus: "For those are not wronged who are punished and receive the wages of their sins; but in others, when God gives and sustains his word, and thereby enlightens, converts, and sustains men, God commends his pure grace and mercy without their merit." One must only refrain from an inference that both Calvinists and Synergists allow themselves against Scripture, namely, the inference that the assertion of *sola gratia* has the denial of *gratia universalis et seria* [[Google](#)] as its "necessary flip side."

8. The cause of the aberration in the doctrine of eternal election. [^]


The cause of the aberration lies in the attempt to solve in this life a mystery whose solution can only be expected in eternal life. The same subject had already to be treated in the doctrines of universal grace and universal redemption, as well as in the doctrines of conversion and preservation in faith.¹⁷¹²⁾ We repeat here, therefore, only briefly: it is, however, beyond the horizon which we men have at our disposal in this life, why, in the case of the general grace of God and in the case of the same total ruin of men, the whole world of men is not saved, but only a part of it. The attempt to explain this mystery has given rise to both Calvinism (the "denial of *universalis gratia*") and Synergism

1712) [II, 21 ff.](#) [582 ff.](#) [594 ff.](#) III, 118 f.

(the denial of *sola gratia*) in the world. Very correctly Thomasius says: "It [the Reformed doctrine] solves the problem before which we stand in such a way that it cuts away one side [universal grace].¹⁷¹³⁾ Synergism, in the same interest, cuts away the other side, *sola gratia*. That the Synergists, too, have at heart the solution of the mystery indicated, they reveal, after Melancthon's arguments, by the whole manner of their argumentation. The core and star of their multifaceted arguments always remains this: It is necessary (*necesse est*, Melancthon) to assume a difference among men with regard to their behavior and their guilt before God. If there were no difference on the part of men before God, but the same guilt and the same evil behavior, then we could not declare the fact why all men believe and become saved, or, what is the same, why some believe and become saved and the others do not. However, this is so. We cannot declare this fact. We cannot, in view of the facts revealed in Scripture, that the grace of God is universal and that men are in the same utter ruin, answer the question, *Cur non omnes?* or, *Cur alii, alii non?* or, *Cur alii prae aliis?* But this position the Scripture instructs us to put the hand on the mouth. The Scripture speaks of "incomprehensible judgments and unsearchable ways" of God in relation to the guidance of the individual men and peoples and justifies the incomprehensibility and unsearchability of these judgments and ways with the fact that no man has given God anything in advance that will be repaid to him. The doctrine of Luther is that at this point there is a mystery, the solution of which we can only expect in eternal life.¹⁷¹⁴⁾ The same mystery is taught by the Formula of Concord, in that it holds the same guilt and the same evil behavior on the part of the blessed and gives the instruction not to go beyond these limits of human knowledge in this life: Whoever is saved is saved by God's grace alone; whoever is lost is lost only through his own fault.¹⁷¹⁵⁾ This mystery is also taught by the doctrines of the

1713) Dogmatik 2 III, 464.
141.

1714) See the quotation II, 52, note

1715) 717, 61. 62 [Trigl, 1083, *ibid.*, 61, 62 Theol. der F. C. I, 124) that the Formula of Concord "made it matter whether scientific equalization was possible or not."

Lutheran theologians of the 16th century before the advent of the *intuitu fidei* theory.¹⁷¹⁶⁾ This mystery was also taught by the Missouri Synod and the whole Synodical Conference in the controversy over the doctrines of Conversion and Election of Grace, and thus they held *universalis gratia* against Calvinism on the one hand, and on the other hand rejected the denial of *sola gratis*, which was present in the opposing assertion that conversion and salvation, and therefore eternal election, depended not only on God's grace, but also on man's different conduct and lesser guilt.¹⁷¹⁷⁾

It has been rightly said that the doctrine of Election of Grace is the final theological exam. The scriptural doctrine of the Election of Grace sweeps out the last remnants of Pelagianism and rationalism. Many boast *bona fide sola gratia* as the heart of Christian doctrine. But as soon as they approach the question of whether the men who become saved are equally guilty before God in comparison with those who are lost, and behave equally badly, they think they have to assume a good behavior and a lesser guilt on the part of those who become saved, and thus deny *sola gratia*. Furthermore: Many boast *bona fide* the Scriptures as the only source and norm of Christian doctrines. But as soon as they are expected to hold both truths, the *universalis gratia* and the *sola gratia*, without rational mediation, solely on the basis of Scripture, even those who count themselves in the Lutheran camp abandon the Scripture Principle and rationalize themselves with the later Melancthon into the synergistic camp. Göschel remarks on the 11th article of the Formula of Concord: "In this article it really becomes more and more clear how the Formula of Concord vigorously campaigns against all rationalism, even the most subtle, the rationalism of the believers, without regard to the person. Precisely because of this, it has attracted opposition from many up to this hour; it is opposed to the rationalism of all levels, and therefore all rationalism is also averse to it, even the rationalism that does not consider itself to be so." ¹⁷¹⁸⁾

1716) Cf. [II, 585, note 1367](#). 1717) Cf. [II, 590, note 1372](#).

1718) The Formula of Concord etc., p. 144 f. Cf. F. P., [Die Grunddifferenz, S. 12 ff.](#) [Zur Einigung 2, S. 29](#) ff. [English translation: [Conversion and Election, p. 40](#) ff.]

Last Things. ^ (De Eschatologia.)

Under this section is presented: 1. the temporal death, 2. the state of souls between death and resurrection, 3. the return of Christ, 4. the resurrection of the dead, 5. the final judgment, 6. the end of the world, 7. eternal damnation, 8. eternal salvation.

1. The temporal death. ^ (De morte temporali)

The essence of death. The essence of the temporal or bodily death¹⁷¹⁹⁾ consists, according to the Scriptures, not in the annihilation of the man, but in the separation of the soul from the body.¹⁷²⁰⁾ The death of the rich man, whose field had brought forth plentifully, is described by the words, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee," την ψυχὴν σου ἀπαιτοῦσιν ἀπὸ σου (Luke 12:20). Likewise it is said of the death of Christ, because it was a true death: ἀφῆκεν τὸ πνεῦμα and: παρε'όκειν τὸ πνεῦμα.¹⁷²¹⁾ Quenstedt: *Forma mortis est animae a corpore solutio et separatio τοπικὴ seu localis*.¹⁷²²⁾

The cause of death. The cause of death is not to be sought in an original condition of human nature, as has been asserted not only by heathens,¹⁷²³⁾ but also within external Christianity.¹⁷²⁴⁾ The Scriptures of the Old

1719) The order: spiritual, bodily, eternal death was dealt with in the doctrine of sin.

1720) Gerhard, L. de morte, § 54: *Nec anima, nec corpus hominis in jnorte in nihilum redigitur. Non anima, quia illa a corpore discedens immortalis subsistit (Matt. 10:28). Non corpus, quia somno consopitum in pulvere terrae quiescit resurrectionem in extremo die exspectans (Ioh. 5:28).* [[Google](#)]

1721) Matt. 27:50; Joh. 19:30.

1722) II, 1701. To *localis* Quenstedt adds by way of explanation: *quia anima vera, a corpore discedit et non amplius in eo manet, illud relinquit et quoad praesentiam et quoad informationem.* [[Google](#)]

1723) Seneca: *Morieris, ista hominis natura, non poena est.* [[Google](#)] In Gerhard, L. de morte, § 27. The detailed antithesis § 38.

1724) The Pelagians, the old and new Unitarians, *Catech. Racov. s. 2, c. I, qu. 2-6*. So also more recent theologians: Nitzsch-Stephan, *Ev. Dogm., p. 358*; Kirn, *Ev. Dogm., p. 92*. Cf. the detailed antithesis in Gerhard, I. c., § 39.

and New Testament know no other cause of death than the sin of man. When it says in Gen. 2:17 in the warning of God: "Which day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die", and after the Fall in Gen. 3:17 ff.: "Because thou hast obeyed the voice of thy wife ..., unto dust shalt thou return", then it comes to the statement that the death was not set by the original nature of man, but only came into the world as a result of the transgression of the divine commandment. Likewise in the New Testamept, Rom. 5:12, it is said of the cause of death, "Death through sin," διὰ τῆς αμαρτίας δ θάνατος, and Rom. 6:23: "Death is the wages of sin," τὰ δψώνια τῆς αμαρτίας θάνατος. The interpretation that death was there before sin, but after sin became a special species of death, a death of judgment,¹⁷²⁵⁾ is an insertion into the text. Scripture knows only death, which is a judgment on sin. All other causes of death that Scripture still mentions are causes only because of and as a result of sin. Thus God is the cause of death, insofar as he, as the justified judge according to his righteousness (*iustitia vindicativa*), inflicts death on the sinner as a punitive evil (*malum poenae*), Ps. 90:7-8: " We are consumed by Thine anger. ... Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee." The devil is a cause of death — he is called John 8:44 ἀνθρωποκτόνος, slayer of men — inasmuch as he tempted men to sin. Adam, too, as the first man, is expressly called the cause of death, Rom. 5:15: "Of one sin the many died," τῷ τὸν ἐνός παραπτώματι οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπέθανον. But from Adam's sin "the many" died because Adam's sin passed to the many by imputation and therefore also by procreation. Even if diseases, old age, fire, water, sword, etc., are mentioned as causes of death, these are only middle causes, which are based as the last and real cause on the one fact that sin entered the world and all men became sinners. That men die after seventy or eighty years, perish by misfortune, by the sword, etc., the Scripture expressly attributes to sin. That the number of years is not in itself the cause of death is also clear from Ps. 90, where not only the deaths that we call sudden deaths are mentioned,

1725) Thus Kirn, *Dogm.*, p. 92 f. Nitzsch-Stephan, *Dogm.*, 357 f.

but also those occurring after seventy or eighty years are attributed to the wrath of God on sin. And when Christ, on the occasion of the death both of those on whom the tower of Siloah fell and of those who perished by Pilate's sword, says: "If you do not repent, you will all perish also" (Luke 13:1-5), he thereby declares the death by sword and misfortune, which only befalls some, to be a consequence of God's wrath against the sin of all men. — The view that death would have occurred even without sin has been supported primarily by the argument that the human body, because of its material nature, must necessarily succumb to dissolution, or that such heterogeneous elements as the immaterial soul and the material body could not possibly get along with each other over time. So especially pagan philosophers.¹⁷²⁶⁾ But it is also said by Nitzsch-Stephan:¹⁷²⁷⁾ "A body composed of the same constituents as the rest of nature can hardly escape the fellowship law of re-dissolution into its parts." It cannot be said that this argument can be placed in the class of reasonable arguments. He who admits an omnipotent God must also admit that this omnipotent God can easily preserve material parts from redissolution. If it is added: "According to the undoubted results of physiological science, the body of the first man would have finally dissolved into its parts again, completely apart from sin", then this is unscientific rhetoric. Also no proofs for the "undoubted results of physiological science" are given. Of all who attribute death, instead of the guilt of sin, to the original constitution of man, it is to be judged, that first of all they do not understand the death of man — this after all important fact. To recognize death precisely as the punishment of sin belongs, according to Scripture, to the prudence necessary to all men.¹⁷²⁸⁾ Secondly, they also do not understand the death of Christ — also an important fact — because Christ's death is a

1726) Further explanation in Gerhard, *L. de morte*, § 38.

1727) *Ev. Dogmatik*, p. 358.

1728) When it is said in Ps. 90:12: "Teach us to remember that we must die, that we may become wise", it is not the fact of death itself that is meant, but the fact of death as a consequence of the sin of the men, as v. 7-11 explicitly say: "Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee", etc.

propitiation as payment of the sin debt of man and thereby for man is life. The denial of the guilt of sin as the only cause of death is always based, consciously or unconsciously, on the denial of the *satisfactio Christi vicaria*,¹⁷²⁹⁾

Subject of death. All men are the subject of death, because the cause of death, sin, is found in all of them. Rom. 5:12: "Death passed upon all men" (διήλθεν, spread), "because all have sinned."¹⁷³⁰⁾ The claim that occurs from time to time that men have discovered a remedy for death is a fraud and self-deception that is also refuted by experience.¹⁷³¹⁾ He who wants to free men from death must attack the evil at its root. He must free men from the cause of death, from the guilt of sin, and from the wrath of God against sin. Christ has done this through the *satisfactio vicaria*, and therefore Christ is the only deliverer from death, as it is said of him in 2 Tim. 1:10: (has done away with) τον θάνατον.


But here it has been asked at all times, how it comes that also the Christians still die, since they have forgiveness of their sins. The fact that Christians also still die was and is cited as proof that death is not to be regarded as a consequence of the guilt of sin. Concerning the death of Christians, Scripture teaches a twofold thing: 1. that Christians, unless they experience the Last Day, must, however, still pass through death, and that as through a judgment on the sin still dwelling in them, Rom. 8:10: "The body is dead because of sin," τὸ σῶμα νεκρὸν διὰ ἁμαρτίαν, 2. that the death of

1729) If the old rationalists so vigorously advocated that death was not a punishment for sin, but a "natural, original institution of the Creator" (Bretschneider, *Dogmatik I*, 845 ff. (p. 820)), they had an eminently personal interest in this. They did not want to let themselves be disturbed by the fact of death in the pleasure of their own righteousness and be caused to have to seek consolation against death in the atoning death of Christ. They therefore instructed man "to develop and use the powers and faculties of both body and mind given to him according to the laws of truth, goodness and beauty, and thereby to become worthy of and capable of a higher and more blessed existence."

1730) Death is personified. The mighty man, Death, "accompanies, as it were, the branching out of the human race" (Stöckhardt [*Römerbrief*, p. 238; *Schade/Stahlke*, p. 217]). Death attaches itself to the heel of all men, because men have become sinners.

1731) Ps. 89:49; Job 14:1. 2.

Christians is no longer death, because what actually makes death death is no longer present in them. What makes death death is the sensus irae divinae, [sense of divine wrath] as the Apology says.¹⁷³²⁾ Through faith in Christ, the sensation of divine wrath has been replaced by the awareness of God's grace, so that in death they entrust their soul into God's hand.¹⁷³³⁾ Then death becomes death because, if nothing intervenes, it is followed by the second death (ὁ θάνατος ὁ δεύτερος Revelation 20:14), eternal destruction. In place of this consequence, however, the opposite consequence has occurred among Christians. They go straight through death into life. Christ says of every believer that he has eternal life (εχει), does not come into judgment, but has passed through from death to life (μεταβέβηκεν).¹⁷³⁴⁾ To what extent this already applies to the state between death and resurrection is to be set forth under the following section. We find, therefore, that Scripture, in regard to the death of believers, is full of *epitheta ornantia* that is, of "predicates of beauty," compiled both by the ancient teachers of the Church and by Luther and our dogmatists. Every Christian, especially every teacher of the Church, should have them at hand and present.¹⁷³⁵⁾

1732) M. 196, 56 [Trigl. 299, 56 ]: *Dicit Paulus 1 Cor. 15:56: „Aculeus mortis peccatum est, potentia vero peccati lex.” Illa potentia peccati, ille sensus irae vere est poena, donec adest; mors sine illo sensui irae proprie non est poena.* [Google]

1733) Examples: Acts 7:58; Luke 2:29. Luther (I, 1512): "Natural death, which is nothing other than the soul separating from the body, is a simple death. But where one feels death, that is, the terror and fear of death, there is the right and true death. Where there is no terror, death is not death but sleep, as Christ says John 8:51: 'He that believeth on me shall not see death.' For where the terror is gone, there is also the death of the soul gone."

1734) Joh. 5:24. The perfect tense μεταβέβηκεν denotes the perfected fact certain to faith. The same perfect tense is found in the Christian statement of faith 1 John 3:14: Ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν, οτι μεταβεβήκαμεν εκ του θανάτου εἰς την ζωήν. Luther (I, 1514): "If you will listen to the law, it will thus say to you, as the old and Christian hymn reads, so one sings in church: 'In the midst of life we are embraced with death.' But this is only a hymn of the law; but the gospel and faith turn this hymn around and sing thus: 'In the midst of death we are in life'. We praise you, dear Lord God, who are our redemption, have raised us from death and made us saved."

1735) Luther writes: "The Scriptures have a very fine way of speaking of death and people who have died," whereupon he points out the "very fine way," XIII, 1328 f.

2. The state of souls between death and resurrection. [^]

The number of scriptural passages dealing with the state of souls before the Last Day is relatively small. The scriptures, when they address the Last Things, focus mainly on the Last Day and what follows it. Of the Corinthians, after they had become faithful, Paul says that they only wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, that is, for the Last Day (1 Cor. 1:7), and with the Philippians he confesses in the name of all Christians: "We wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will glorify our vain body." ¹⁷³⁶⁾ Likewise, with regard to the unbelievers, the Last Day, and what follows it, comes to the fore. It is said of unbelievers, "Which shall suffer chastisement, eternal destruction (δίκην τίσονσιν, δλεθρον αιώνιον) from the presence of the Lord, and from His glorious power when He shall come."¹⁷³⁷⁾ But there are some clear passages of Scripture that give information about the state of souls between death and resurrection.

Of the souls of unbelievers (ἀπειθήσαντες) it is said that they are kept εν φυλακή, in prison, that is, in a place of punishment.¹⁷³⁸⁾ Of the souls of believers it is said not only in general that they are in God's hand,¹⁷³⁹⁾ but also in particular that they dwell with Christ and in paradise.¹⁷⁴⁰⁾ The "being with Christ" of the departed faithful souls, in comparison with the fellowship which Christians have with Christ here on earth, certainly denotes a *plus*, because Paul adds, "which also would be much better" (πολλω μάλλον κρείσσον), namely, than his fellowship with Christ here on earth.

 "The Scripture does not call death death, but a sleep," etc.; VIII, 1230: "Henceforth we must learn a new address and language to speak of death and the grave. ... This is not a human, earthly language, but a divine, heavenly language. For such things are not found in any books of all the learned and wise men of the earth. ... But among Christians this is to be a knowable, common and current language." "We must learn to scrape the tongue." Quenstedt on "mortis dulcia nomina," II, 1699. In even greater detail Gerhard, De morto, § 17 sqq.

1736) Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:13 ff; 2 Tim. 4:7-9; Tit. 2:13.

1737) 2 Thess. 1:9. 10.

1738) 1 Pet. 3:19-20. Opinions of the heathen about the state of the departed souls in Gerhard, *L. de morte*, § 163.

1739) Acts 7:58; Luke 23:46.

1740) Phil. 1:23; Luke 23:43. About the latter passage Luther I, 1763.

Being "in paradise", which Christ promises to the soul of the faithful thief, perfectly expresses a blissful state..¹⁷⁴¹⁾ From this it is clear that the separated souls of the believers are in a state of blessed enjoyment of God, even if we do not know anything more about how. Conclusions from the nature of the human soul, which cannot be inactive,¹⁷⁴²⁾ are uncertain and therefore not to be urged in theology. ¶ A soul sleep that excludes a blissful enjoyment of God,¹⁷⁴³⁾ is to be rejected on the basis of Phil. 1:23 and Luke 23:43. A soul sleep that includes an enjoyment of God (according to Luther) is not to be called erroneous doctrine.¹⁷⁴⁴⁾ The Roman *purgatory*, into which Rome puts the souls of believers in order to atone for temporal punishments that are still in arrears, is pure fiction, because according to Scripture believers do not have purgatory but life through faith in Christ.¹⁷⁴⁵⁾ And this is true not only of the soul of Paul and Stephen,¹⁷⁴⁶⁾ but also of the soul of the faithful Shechita.¹⁷⁴⁷⁾ Modern Protestant theologians also teach

 1741) Erroneous opinions about the paradise of the faithful souls with church fathers, who grasped it as *paradisus terrestris*, Gerhard, l. c.. 163 sq. Luther on Luke 23:43: "There heaven and paradise is one thing."



1742) For example, Baier II, 232, nota b.

1743) So erroneous many church fathers, in Quenstedt II, 1745 sqq. Very strange is Hofmann, *Schriftbeweis* 2 II, 480: "Whoever dies in faith, his soul is in a state which corresponds to the state of death of his decaying, but resurrection-awaiting body."

1744) Luther I, 1758 ff; II, 215 ff. The detailed dogma-historical account in Gerhard, *De morte*, § 293 sqq. Luther's address to the state of souls between death and resurrection is more reserved than Gerhard's and later theologians', who transfer many things to the state between death and resurrection that can be said with certainty only of the state after the resurrection. Luther (II, 216): "It is the divine truth that Abraham [after death] lives with God, serves Him and also reigns with Him. But what kind of life this is, whether he sleeps or wakes, that is another question. How the soul rests we are not to know; but it is certain that it lives."

1745) Joh. 5:24; 3:18, 36. Luther (I, 1762): "Especially these are vain lies with the purgatory; because the same is based on vain godlessness and unbelief. For they deny the doctrine that faith saves, and set satisfaction for sin as the cause of salvation."

1746) Phil. 1:23; Acts 7:58.

1747) Luke 23:43. Luther on the papist purgatory II, 2067 f. Smalc. Art, 303, 12-15 [*Trigl.* 465, Part II, Art. II, 12—15 ]; 316, 26-27 [*ibid.* 485, Part III, Art. III, 26—27 ]. Gerhard treats purgatory in more than a hundred paragraphs, *De morte*, § 181-292.

a kind of purgatory for the secluded faithful souls. Kahnis, for example, says:¹⁷⁴⁸⁾ "In the idea of the purgatory there is undoubtedly a truth, namely that for many Christians a purification is still necessary. Great is the number of Christians of whom it cannot be said that Christ is their life. But they are drawn to him and confess what they have known of him with a sincerity, selflessness, and faithfulness of conduct that can only put to shame many Christians who are stronger in words than in works. Shall there be no hope for them? Not small is the number of Christians who, as far as men can judge, stand in the true faith, but whose faith is still strongly mixed with the dross of the old man, so that one would like to judge that they cannot enter paradise as they are now, if paradise is to remain paradise. Do not say that with the body also much of the old apostasy will fall away. ... The peculiarity of a man cannot be removed with a magic blow. How can a Christian who lacked love suddenly become a stream of love through death? And so we must well assume that in that world there is still room for purification and development." From Kahnis' words it is clear that he advocates a purgatory from the Roman doctrine of works. He has lost the central Christian truth that Christ, through his *satisfactio vicaria*, has completely acquired for all men the forgiveness of sins and salvation, and that at the very moment in which a man believes in Christ as his Savior through the action of the Holy Spirit, he has forgiveness of sins and salvation (εχει, John 3:36; 5:24). Therefore, Kahnis has also lost the right connection and the right separation of justification and sanctification. He describes Christians as they are not at all. All Christians, even the weakest, have Christ as their life. All also confess Christ and walk in the new life according to the new man, or in so far as they are faithful in Christ. However, their faith is still strongly tainted with the dross of the old man. But according to the Christian doctrine they have abundant and daily forgiveness of sins as long as they remain in faith (1 John 2:2). If one wanted to send them to a purgatory after this life because of these drosses, we would have to do this with regard to all Christians, the apostle

1748) [Dogmatik² II, 498.](#)

Paul included. Paul confesses on the one hand: "What I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20); on the other hand he laments the dross of the old man still clinging to him with the words: "O wretched man, who will deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:23-24.) — To the question raised in this context, whether the condition of a man can be removed as "with a magic stroke", a double thing is to be said: 1. Man is born again and taken from the dominion of sin at the same moment in which faith arises in him through the action of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:2, 14). Faith is not a work of human consideration, self-decision, participation, etc., but a creative work of God, just as God caused light to shine out of darkness at creation (2 Cor. 4:6). 2. However, Luther and the old Lutheran doctrines are right when they teach that with death the soul of the believer is cleansed from the last dross of the original sinful corruption still clinging to it.¹⁷⁴⁹⁾ The scriptural proof of this lies in the expression "in paradise." Paradise is the abode of the sinless man. When it is said of the faithful soul after its separation from the body that it dwells in paradise, its sinlessness is thereby expressed. Also the "being with Christ", Phil. 1:23, is such an increase of the fellowship with Christ, that the soul is completely removed of sin. Luther therefore calls dying the last purgatory of the soul. — One has also thought of an intermediate body for the departed souls. Kahnis reports, "Theologians (Schleiermacher) and philosophers (Fichte, Weiße, Göschel) rise to the conviction that without a bodily basis the survival of the soul is inconceivable."¹⁷⁵⁰⁾ Kahnis also likes this thought. Likewise Macpherson, who thinks. "It may fairly be assumed that during the period that elapses between the death of an individual and the coming of Christ, which brings with it the general resurrection, he wears a body suitable to his condition during that period, which in the resurrection to judgment is changed for that spiritual body which he will wear throughout eternity." [*Christian Dogmatics*, p. 453] He adds:

1749) Luther X, 2119 ff. Gerhard, *L. de morte*, § 55. Philippi VI 7.

1750) Dogmatics 2 II, 522.

"Schleiermacher, in particular, has dwelt upon the impossibility of our conceiving or imagining a human spirit unassociated with a body."¹⁷⁵¹⁾ But Scripture knows nothing of this intermediate body. That Schleiermacher could not conceive of a human spirit without a body is no reason to assume it. Schleiermacher could have spared himself the worry about the existence of a bodiless soul if he had held that there is a personal and omnipotent God who is well able to maintain a soul in existence without its body.¹⁷⁵²⁾

With regard to the departed souls it still stands: 1. they do not return to this earth. This is taught by Christ as a standing rule and divine order Luke 16:27-31. Moses and Elijah, who appeared on the mount of transfiguration and spoke with Christ (Matt. 17:3), are to be counted among the resurrected.¹⁷⁵³⁾ According to the Scriptures, we are not entitled to ascribe to themselves the knowledge of the individual things and processes on earth.¹⁷⁵⁴⁾ The invocation of the departed saints for their intercession and help, which Rome prescribes,¹⁷⁵⁵⁾ is not only idolatry but also folly.¹⁷⁵⁶⁾ The Scriptures give us no support for the doctrine that there is still a possibility of conversion for the departed souls. The reasons given for this lie in the realm of human thought. That 1 Pet. 3:18-19 according to the context does not speak of a sermon of the gospel, but of a proclamation of judgment, has already been explained.¹⁷⁵⁷⁾

1751) [Christian Dogmatics; Edinburgh 1898, p. 453.](#)

1752) [Thomasius](#) rejects the "intermediate body" ([Dogmatik III, 2, 445](#)). But for the assumed clothing of the soul with the transfigured corporeality of Christ, the scriptural basis is also missing. It is the consequence of the human thought of a physical effectiveness of the sacraments.

1753). Whoever assumes that 1 Sam. 28 is an exception made by God Himself, so that not a devil's ghost but the soul of Samuel appeared, must teach that through this exception the rule so clearly stated by Christ is not abolished and therefore the old and modern spiritualism belongs to the devil's service and deceit, which God rebuked the Canaanites with extermination, 5 Mos. 18:11-12.

1754) Is. 63:16: "though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not."

1755) Trident, sess. 25; Smets, p. 165 sq.: [bonum atque utile esse, suppliciter eos \[sanctos\] invocare.](#)

1756) On the Invocation of the Saints, Apol. 223, 1 ff. [[Trigl. 343, XXI](#)]

[☞](#) 1757) [II, 374 ff.](#)

3. The Second Coming of Christ. [^]

Scripture teaches that Christ will return to all men visibly,¹⁷⁵⁸⁾ and indeed to all men at once,¹⁷⁵⁹⁾ in divine glory and surrounded by the heavenly court of angels¹⁷⁶⁰⁾ for the general judgment of the world¹⁷⁶¹⁾ and for the introduction of his church into the eternal glory¹⁷⁶²⁾. Luther: "He will not then lie in a manger nor ride on an ass, as He did in the first future, but will come forth from the clouds with great power and glory."¹⁷⁶³⁾ This return of Christ is as a certain fact both against the direct denial of it on the part of the scoffers who say, "Where is the promise of His future?"¹⁷⁶⁴⁾ and against the forgetfulness of the

1758) As Christ visibly, βλέπόντων αὐτῶν, ascended to heaven, so, according to the express explanation of Scripture, He will return in a visible manner, ἐλεύσεται δὲ τρόπον ἐθεάσασθε αὐτὸν ποσειδόμενον εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν (Acts 1:9, 11.)

1759) That a successive round trip in the world or in heaven is not to be thought of is not only stated in Matt. 24:27, 30 and Luke 17:24 ("As the lightning goeth forth from the rising, and shineth even unto the going down"), but is also contained in the fact that Christ will appear to all the inhabitants of the earth "as a thief in the night", "at an hour when ye think not", 1 Thess. 5:2; Matt. 24:44, so that, for example, Europe cannot give America telegraphic news of Christ's coming.

1760) Matt. 25:31: The Son of man shall come ἐν τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι μετ' αὐτοῦ. Likewise Matt. 16:27. Baier (II, 260) compiles the business of the angels from Scripture thus: *Angelorum munus erit, non solum Christ comitari et sono ingenti excitato manifestare eius adventum (1. ad Thess. 4:16), verum etiam homines, cum e morte resuscitados, tum vivos deprehensos, ex omnibus mundi partibus congregare (Matt. 24:31), segregare deinde pios ab impiis (Matt. 13:49), denique damnatos ad infernum detrudere (Matt. 13:42).* [[Google](#)]

1761) Matt. 25:31: "All nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate them one from another."

1762) Hebr. 9:26-27: "At the end of the world [at the time of the New Testament] Christ appeared once to cancel sin through his own sacrifice. ... At the other time (ἐκ δευτέρου) he will appear without sin to those who wait for him for salvation" (εἰς σωτηρίαν, for Introduction to eternal Salvation).

1763) St. L. IX, 951. The passages that address the spiritual coming of Christ in the means of grace (Joh. 14:21-23) cannot be confused with the visible coming of Christ to the Last Judgment. Cf. Thomasius, Dogm. III, 2, 462, note.

1764) 2 Pet. 3:3-4: "In the last days scoffers (ἐμπαίκται) will come, walking according to their own lusts, saying, Where is the

Christians who, according to their flesh, are inclined to let the return of Christ take a back seat for themselves, .¹⁷⁶⁵⁾

But as certain as Christ's visible return is, the time and hour of it, that is, the time of its occurrence, according to Christ's saying, is hidden¹⁷⁶⁶⁾ and is therefore calculated in vain by men.¹⁷⁶⁷⁾ But let men diligently watch for the signs of Christ's return (τα σημεία τῆς παρουσίας), of which the Scriptures reveal a whole series.¹⁷⁶⁸⁾

Signs revealed in Scripture. ^ Luther rightly says: "All creatures will ... serve this day with signs."¹⁷⁶⁹⁾ These are the abnormal conditions or diseases a. in the life of nations (the mutual hostilities of nations, wars, pestilences, famines, enmity against the Christian Church, etc.), b. in the kingdom of nature (earthquakes, floods of water, disturbances in the heavenly bodies, etc.), c. especially in the Church (false teachers, apostasy from the Gospel, the appearance of the Antichrist κατ' ἐξοχήν, who poses as God in the church

promise of his future? For after the fathers have fallen asleep, all things remain as they have been from the beginning of the creature." This address of the scoffers proves at the same time that the parousia of Christ was general Christian doctrine.

1765) Especially the chapters 24 and 25 of Matthew and the parallels in Luke, ch. 21 belong to this category. That these references to the return of Christ are meant as warnings especially for Christians is evident from their content and is explicitly emphasized in Mark. 13:37: "But what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!"

1766) Matt. 24:36: "But of that day and hour (περί δέ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης καί τῆς ώρας) no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, but My Father alone." On the addition Mark. 13:32: "not even the Son" (οὐδε ὁ υἱός) cf. II, 180 ff.

1767) That in spite of the explicit explanation of Christ of the incalculability of the day and the hour of the return of Christ, nevertheless men like Bengel have indulged in this calculation, is a proof of how deeply also in the flesh of the Christians forbidden curiosity is rooted. Bengel determined the year 1836 as the year of the Parousia. In Luther's time, Michael Stiefel calculated the Last Day to be October 19, 1533, at the eighth hour. Stiefel considered himself to be the seventh angel who would precede the Last Day with his revelation (XXII, 1334), and was very displeased that Luther would not believe him. Luther reports, "All my life no adversary has given me such evil words as he." Other doomsday calculations Semisch shares, RE.² III, 201 f. "Failed expectations only stimulated increased confidence."

1768) In particular, this includes Matt. 24, Luke 21:2 Thess. 2.

1769) St. L. XI, 59; I, 255 f.

and under Christ's name seduces to apostasy from Christ by lying powers, signs and wonders). As the disturbances and diseases in the life of the individual man (microcosm) are harbingers of the approaching death, so the mentioned disturbances and diseases in the kingdom of nature (macrocosm) and in the church are the harbingers of the approaching great judgment and the end of the world. Luther: "Heaven and earth are crashing as an old house that is about to collapse and break down, and are indeed posing as if they suspected that the world would soon come to an end, and that the day is near at hand."¹⁷⁷⁰) That they are not recognized as such harbingers or signs by men, and are often overlooked even by Christians, comes from the "astonishing stupor" (mirabilis stupor) found in our eyes, senses, and hearts after the Fall.¹⁷⁷¹) "We live in a more than Egyptian darkness."¹⁷⁷²) What is actually abnormal and unnatural, we consider to be completely normal and natural. But that in all the things mentioned we are confronted with a quite terror-stricken unnature should truly, as Luther reminds us, "sting our eyes." The fact that in human life interests are opposed to one another and that a bellum ommum contra omnes takes place, that whole peoples rise up against one another and kill one another in wars by the thousands and millions, is an appalling abnormality, if we consider that men are created for mutual love and service. The same is to be said of epidemics and famines, if we keep in mind that men are to fill the earth and that the earth has the destiny to feed men. A terrible unnaturalness is also present in the fact that the world of men is hostile to the Christian church. God has reconciled the human world to Himself through the blood of His incarnate Son and has the Word of the reconciliation that has taken place, the Gospel, proclaimed through His Church in the world for the salvation of the world. But instead of accepting the word and welcoming the proclaimers of the same as benefactors, building gates of honor for them and giving them orders, what happens is what Christ describes with the words: "They will hand you over in tribulation and will kill you, and you will be hated for My name's sake by all

1770) St. L. VII, 1480 f.

1771) St. L. I, 256. opp. exeg., Erl. I, 266. 1772) I, 255. 265.

peoples." ¹⁷⁷³⁾ That the earth trembles, shatters the structures of man's hand and buries man himself under the debris; that floods of water swallow up man and his possessions: these are truly not normal phenomena, and Christ wants them to be regarded as signs of the surely imminent end of the world. ¹⁷⁷⁴⁾ But especially Christ declares the appearance of false doctrines in the church to be a sign of the end of the world. The reason for this is not difficult to see. The gospel was dearly purchased by Christ through his *satisfactio vicaria*; by his command it is proclaimed in the world, and it is a power of God that saves all who believe in it. One would think that all those who want to be Christian teachers would be most eager to bring the message to the people pure and unadulterated, without subtraction or addition. But instead of this, what Christ points out with the words, "Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many," occurs. ¹⁷⁷⁵⁾ Even the denial of the *satisfactio vicaria* of Christ is common in external Christianity. This is such an abnormal phenomenon, contrary to the purpose of the existence of the Church and the purpose of the existence of the world, that Christ wants the false teachers to be regarded as signs of judgment and the end of the world. From the catastrophes that indicate Christ's appearance, the Scriptures still emphasize details in particular. Christ wants such conspicuous judgments of God as the Flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the destruction of Jerusalem as preludes

1773) Matt. 24:9; Joh. 16:2; Matt. 10:17; Rom. 8:36 etc. Examples: Acts 14:5-6, 19; 16:22 ff. etc.

1774) Luke 21:25-26. Luther on this passage: "Therefore Christ will say that all creatures will move and serve this day with signs: Sun and moon with darkness, the stars with falling, the nations with wars, the men with fear and dread, the earth with trembling, the waters with wind and roaring, the air with pestilence and poison. So also the heavens with their host and movements." (XI, 59.) — To the objection that the events mentioned, especially those of the sun, moon, and stars, can also be explained naturally and therefore could not be signs of the end of the world, Luther answers, op. cit., Col. 51: "The heavens are from eternity directed that before this day they should make such signs. ... The blind leader Aristotle has written his own book of the heavenly signs, gives them all to nature and makes that she does not find signs; our scholars follow this, and makes a fool of the world full of fools."

1775) Matt. 24:5.

of the general judgment of the world.¹⁷⁷⁶⁾ — Finally, it should be noted that Christ also conflates the sermon of the gospel in the whole world with the end of the world when he says: "The gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world for a witness to all nations, and then the end will come."

How far have these signs been fulfilled? We will have to keep it with Luther, who on the one hand addresses this point with restraint, on the other hand says, "that such signs have already happened in several parts and not much else is to be expected".¹⁷⁷⁷⁾ It should be added here, with regard to the nature of the signs, that they are deliberately arranged in such a way that no man can calculate the exact time of Christ's return.¹⁷⁷⁸⁾ The purpose of this economy is to achieve continual watchfulness as the Lord expressly Matt. 24:42 says: "Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord will come." Meyer

1776) In this relationship of the destruction of Jerusalem as a prelude to the final judgment it is justified that both are placed next to each other and mixed up. Cf. Matt. 24:2-14, 15-21, 22-51. Also Matt. 16:27-28 Stöckhardt, Bibl. Gesch. d. N. T., p. 256 [English edition *The Biblical history of the New Testament : short explanation of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles*, p. 248 #16] : "The destruction of Jerusalem appears on the one hand as a sign of the Last Day, on the other hand as the beginning of the Final Judgment." Meyer Meyer criticizes Luther for assuming Matt. 24 to be "a medley of type and antitype." In contrast, Thomasius (Dogm. III, 2, 460, note) says: "As to the prophecy of the Lord in Matt. 24 (cf. Luke 21), I consider the interpretation to be erroneous which wants to distinguish between that which then refers to the judgment of Jerusalem and that which refers to the end. Both flow through each other; the first is the exemplary foreground, the latter the background, which forms the actual subject of the whole prophecy. In the model of the end which it will take with Jerusalem, the Lord looks at and shows the eventual end, in such a way that the features of what will happen at the end overlap the relationship to the fate of the city and shine through it at every point."

1777) St. L. XI, 50 f.: "I do not want to speak outrageously here, but rather my opinion. Some think that the sun will become so dark that it will no longer shine. This is nothing; for day and night must remain until the end, as God promised in Genesis 8:22: 'As long as the earth stands, fruit and harvest, frost and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease. Therefore this sign must happen without hindrance of day and night and yet must happen before the Last Day, because it is a preceding sign. Therefore it cannot be otherwise than that the sun shall cease to shine, as it is wont to do. [CPH 1950: 'ordinary eclipse']"

1778) Also in the apostolic time it could be said that the sermon of the gospel reached the whole world, Rom. 1:8; 10:18; 1 Thess. 1:8; Acts 19:10; 1 Tim. 3:16.

is morally indignant here. He says¹⁷⁷⁹⁾ against Olshausen: "If the Lord willed, as Olshausen thinks, that his parousia should be constantly thought possible, even probable, and therefore spoke as he did according to Matthew, he has used an untrue means for a moral end." Meyer should have thought of the analogue of human life. With respect to human life, too, God has arranged matters in such a way that every man can and should expect the end of his life at any time. In this, however, God has a very "moral end," namely, the end that man should be ready at all times for a blessed death.

Signs of the Last Day conceived by men. ^ These include, first of all, a thousand-year kingdom, still thought to be future, in which Christ will visibly reign here on earth with the pious, especially with the resurrected martyrs. The opinion of such a kingdom of Christ on earth appeared very early in the Christian church and was called by the general name Chiliasm. Chiliasm is multicolored, and the division into *chiliasmus crassissimus*, *crassus* and *subtilis*¹⁷⁸⁰⁾ does not always cover the individual cases. Chiliasmus has been called very coarse (*crassissimus*), which expects a great abundance of not only spiritual but also earthly joys and pleasures in a millennial kingdom still to come on earth. Chiliasm has been called crude (*crassus*), which assumes that the church will flourish and be at peace on earth for a thousand years after the general conversion of the Jews and the fall of the Antichrist. This chiliasm teaches a double imminent visible return of Christ and a double resurrection of the dead, including or excluding an "orientation of the kingdom of Christ on earth" to Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Subtle (*subtilis*) chiliasm, which, without a double return of Christ and without a double resurrection of the dead, limits itself to a "hope of better times" (Spener) that will come for the Church on earth before the end of the world. But it has been rightly recalled that in the individual representatives of Chiliasm even the "fundamental ideas"

1779) *Kommentar zum Matthäusev* ⁶, p. 504.

1780) Pfeiffer's classification in his "Antichiliasmus," p. 111 f., citing Baier-Walther II, 252.

have many modifications. ¶ Chiliasm has no ground in Scripture, because the passages cited for it are referred in Scripture itself to the spiritual glory of the New Testament Church, which dawns in the world through the coming of Christ into the flesh and the sermon of the gospel. These are passages such as Is. 2:2-4; 11:6-9; Zech. 9:9-10; Joel 3:23 ff; Micah 4:1-4 and especially Revelation 20. Is. 2:2-3 is clearly taught that all nations will come to Mount Zion: "All the heathen shall come running, and many nations shall go, saying, Come, and let us go up into the mountain of the Lord, unto the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his doctrines." This same statement of a gathering of the nations on Mount Zion, at Jerusalem, etc., runs throughout Old Testament prophecy. But the Scriptures do not transfer the fulfillment of this prophecy to a still future millennial kingdom, but say of all believers who have come to believe the gospel at the time of the New Testament without a change of place: "Ye are come (προσεληλύσατε) unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God."¹⁷⁸¹ It is well said further Is. 2:4 that there will be great peace on Mount Zion: "They will turn their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; for no nation will lift up a sword against another." The same statement about the state of joy and peace among the nations we have, though in somewhat different words, in the other Old Testament passages mentioned. Is. 9:5: all the instruments of war are done away with and burned with fire. Is. 11:6-9: "the wolves will dwell with the lambs," etc. "One will not hurt nor destroy on my holy mountain." Zech. 9:10: "I will cut off the chariots from Ephraim and the horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be broken." Micah 4:1-4 we have a literal repetition of Is. 2:2. The Millenialists admonish us to let these statements about the great peace that reigns in Zion be brought to bear according to their "full, real content." We take this admonition to heart. But neither do we forget that the angels sing, not in a millennial kingdom yet to come, but already at the birth of Christ, and to the sermon of the Gospel at the birth of Christ: "Peace on earth!"

1781) Hebr. 12:22.

and that Christ says not only of the inhabitants of a future millennial kingdom, but of all who believe the gospel, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you"¹⁷⁸²⁾ and, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation."¹⁷⁸³⁾ Likewise, the apostle Paul looks at the matter. He calls the gospel "the gospel of peace"¹⁷⁸⁴⁾ and ascribes to all who believe the gospel the peace that is higher than all reason.¹⁷⁸⁵⁾ In other words: What the Old Testament passages say about the future peace in the world, according to its "full, real content," does not come to full reality only in a still future millennial kingdom, but in the fact that the Son of God appeared in the flesh, reconciled the world to God, has the message of this proclaimed in the world, and gives to this message the Holy Spirit, who works faith in the message in the hearts and thus makes children of peace in the whole world and among all peoples. In faith in the Gospel, the Christian Church possesses a state of peace on earth that cannot be surpassed on earth or in this course of the world. Interpretation to an earthly or fleshly peace is expressly forbidden. Matt. 10:34: "Do not think that I have come to send peace on earth. I have not come to send peace, but the sword." This is the interpretation of the New Testament. But even in the Old Testament passages themselves, the peace of which they speak is bound up with the coming of Christ into the flesh and with the New Testament sermon of the Gospel, and is presented as a direct result and effect of these events. The proclamation of peace Is. 9:2-5 is followed by the justification of the same in the words, "For unto us a child is born," etc. For the state of peace that Is. 11:6-9 ("The wolves shall dwell with the lambs," etc.), the fact is stated immediately beforehand as *causa efficiens*: "There shall go forth a rod from the tribe of Jesse, and a branch from his root shall bring forth fruit." Likewise, it is already clearly stated not only in the New Testament, but also in the Old Testament, that the coming of the nations to Mount Zion is not a bodily one, but takes place through Zion going into all the world with the

1782) Joh. 14:27.

1783) Joh. 16:33.

1784) Eph. 6:15.

1785) Phil. 4:7.

Gospel, and thus the heathen and "the rest" of Israel coming to Zion through faith in the gospel, without any change of place. Hos. 2:1: "And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said unto them: Ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, O ye children of the living God!" Further: what is prophesied in the Old Testament passages about the fullness of spiritual knowledge to Zion — like Is. 11:9: "The land is full of the knowledge of the Lord, as if covered with the waters of the sea"; especially Joel 3:1 ff.: "Your sons and daughters shall prophesy" etc. — that goes, as Peter in his Pentecost sermon Acts 2:16 ff., this is fulfilled by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament at Pentecost. What is said of the rebuilding of the tabernacle of David and of the fruitfulness of the land of Canaan, so that seed and harvest fall together, the mountains dripping with sweet wine and the hills flowing with milk,¹⁷⁸⁶⁾ James declares at the Apostolic Council as being fulfilled by the entry of the heathen into the Christian church.¹⁷⁸⁷⁾ All interpretations of these passages to a millennial kingdom yet to come rather than to the Christian church of the New Testament and its perfected state in eternity are set up and held against the interpretation of Scripture itself. Gerhard rightly says in reference to the Old Testament scriptural passages cited by the Millennialists that they "speak of New Testament things in Old Testament terms."¹⁷⁸⁸⁾ Also, the Millennialists refute themselves by, as Philippi reminds us,¹⁷⁸⁹⁾ also figuratively grasping certain expressions in the Old Testament passages, e.g., the growing of Mount Zion over all the mountains of the world (Is. 2) and the dripping of the mountains with sweet wine as well as the flowing of the hills with milk (Joel 3).

As for Revelation 20 in particular, this passage cannot be cited for a millennial kingdom on earth, because the millennial "reigning with Christ" (v. 4, 6) mentioned there takes place in heaven. This is also admitted by Franz Delitzsch. On the one hand, he dares to say that "now there is hardly a faithful Christian who does not share the chiliastic view of the Last Days"; on the other hand, he admits: "Nevermore does Rev. 20:4 grant for the regnum millenarium

1786) Amos 9:11 ff.; Joel 3:23 ff. 1787) Acts 15:13 ff.

1788) *De consummatione seculi*, § 90. 1789) *Glaubenslehre* VI, 223.

a sufficient scriptural ground."¹⁷⁹⁰⁾ When Revelation 20:4 says of the souls of believers that they reign with Christ in heaven, this should not alienate us. As surely as Christ, seated at the right hand of God, rules all things, so surely do both the souls of believers in heaven and believers on earth rule with Him, because believers share in all that Christ does.¹⁷⁹¹⁾ Christ has made them, as "priests," so also "kings."¹⁷⁹²⁾ What the 2nd Psalm says of Christ alone, Christ ascribes to all His own, Revelation 2:26-27: "To him that overcometh will I give power over the heathen, and he shall feed them with a rod of iron, and as the vessels of a potter shall he break them in pieces, as I received of my Father." Admittedly, it is true that the believers' rule over the world will not be revealed until the Last Day. But the fact is that it is already before the Last Day, when the believers are also the outwardly oppressed, dying and killed. In short, the scriptural statements on which chiliasm relies come to their full reality, according to the exposition given in Scripture itself, through what the church of the New Testament already has and expects in heaven through faith in the gospel. — As for the binding of Satan mentioned in Revelation 20, Scripture does not leave us in doubt about the correct understanding of this expression either. According to the doctrines of Scripture, the whole human world lies bound under the dominion of the devil as a result of the guilt of sin that weighs upon the world. The foundation of this relationship of dominion has been removed by the atoning death of Christ. Christ himself speaks before his death passage and for the interpretation of the same: "Now the prince of this world will be cast out," ἐκβληθήσεται ἔξω.¹⁷⁹³⁾ For individual men the dominion of the devil comes to an end, and thus the devil is bound for them, at the very moment when they are converted by faith in the gospel, that is, by faith in the atonement for sin made by Christ. Again, this explanation is given by Scripture itself. Paul's apostolic mandate reads: "Behold, I send you among the heathen to open their eyes,

1790) Die biblisch-proph. Theologie 1845, p. 6 f. p. 136. Quoted in Baier-Walther [II, 256](#).

1791) Cf. the detailed explanation on pp. 94 ff.

1792) Revelation 1:6; also 1 Pet. 2:9: "royal priesthood".

1793) Joh. 12:31. Joh. 16:11: ὁ ἀρχὸν τὸν κόσμον τοῦτον κέκριται..

that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power (ἐξουσία) of Satan unto God."¹⁷⁹⁴) To the Colossians Paul writes that all who believe the forgiveness of sins through Christ's blood are saved from the authority (ἐξουσία, power) of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son.¹⁷⁹⁵) There is no other means of deliverance of the world of men from the dominion of the devil than the sermon of the gospel and faith in the gospel. Such factors as worldly science and education, external recognition and world status of Christianity since Constantine are not in themselves a means of binding Satan. It was precisely the persecuted Church that overcame the devil and the world through faith in the Gospel. If this stands firm — namely, that Satan becomes a bound man only through faith in the gospel — then we will have to place the beginning of the thousand years with Luther¹⁷⁹⁶) in the time when the sermon of the gospel went out into the world of men, so that they might be converted from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God. Accordingly, we hold that the "thousand years" of Revelation 20 *plus* the "little time" (μικρός χρόνος) constitute the whole time of the New Testament, because the little time which follows the thousand years (v. 3) is immediately followed by the general judgment of the world (vv. 9-10). When the "little time" in which Satan is released begins or has begun can no more be calculated by year and day than the day of the coming of the Last Judgment. But it is characterized as the time of a general onslaught against "the army camp of the saints and the beloved city", i.e. against the Christian church. Here we do not have to think of worldly wars. Also in the recent "great World War" neither the "central powers" nor the "allies" represented the army camp of the saints and the beloved city, but on both sides the unbelievers formed the great majority, as at all times. The general onslaught against the Christian Church takes place through the general fight against the Christian doctrine of the gracious forgiveness of sins for the sake of Christ's .satisfactio vicaria. This is, after all, the doctrine on which the Christian Church stands by faith. Because the fight against this

1794) Acts 26:17-18. 1795) Col. 1:13-14. 1796) St. L. XIV, 137.

foundation of the Christian church is quite general in our time, we consider that we live in the "little time". We are not thinking primarily of social democracy.¹⁷⁹⁷⁾ In the majority of its members it certainly also forms a contingent, but only a contingent to the army which is as numerous as the sands of the sea (ὡν ὁ ἀριθμὸς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης) and which storms against Christendom in the four corners of the earth. Here belongs not only Rome, which with increased zeal of the Pope leads word and work doctrine into the field against the Christian church, but also the great army of Protestants, who in our time do not let the Scriptures be the Word of God and deny the *satisfactio vicaria* and thus seek to deprive the Christian church of the foundation of faith. This also includes lodgism, which is widespread throughout the world and especially in our country, because it is based on the denial of Christ as the only reconciler of men. Even missionary societies belong here, insofar as they want to Christianize the world in one generation, but give the mission a goal on this side, namely, not to save men from the world and eternal damnation in heaven, but to raise mankind morally, to fill it with "Christian principles" and especially to "spread democracy". If this goal is really realized,¹⁷⁹⁸⁾ our missionary societies also belong to the "Gog and Magog" who fight against the camp of the saints and the "beloved city".¹⁷⁹⁹⁾

In order to recognize chiliasm as a false doctrine directly contrary to Scripture, keep the following details in mind: 1. Chiliasm teaches a double yet

1797) Against Philippi, *Glaubenslehre* VI, 220.

1798) Fortunately, this does not always happen, but besides, just as in the Roman Church, there is also the *satisfactio vicaria*, by which the Holy Spirit can make members of the Christian Church.

1799) One should refrain from wanting to determine Gog and Magog geographically as peoples. Who we have to think of with Gog and Magog, we learn from the predicate. But the predicate is about a battle that is waged on the whole earth and from the whole earth against the Christian church: "They came out from the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints." We have, then, by Gog and Magog to think of all the powers which throughout the world are fighting the Christian faith, that the incarnate Son of God by his vicarious satisfaction has reconciled men to God, and that men are saved from hell to heaven by faith alone in the reconciliation which has taken place.

imminent visible coming of Christ, a visible coming for the establishment of the millennial kingdom and a visible coming for the general judgment of the world. The Scriptures, on the other hand, reckon in Hebr. 9:28 the visible advent of Christ and explicitly say that after Christ's coming into the flesh, which happened for the purpose of the redemption of the sins of men, only His visible coming for the introduction of His own into salvation is to be expected. Heb. 9:28: "Christ is once offered to take away many sins; the second time (ἐκ δευτέρου) he will appear to those who wait for him for salvation."

2. Chiliasm teaches a double resurrection of the dead, or more precisely, a resurrection of the dead in two divisions, a resurrection of the martyrs and especially pious Christians to reign in the millennial kingdom on earth, and a resurrection of the bulk of ordinary Christians and all men to the world judgment. Christ, on the other hand, refers all who believe in him only to the resurrection on the Last Day, John 6:40: "He who sees the Son and believes in him has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the Last Day" (τῇ ἑσχατῇ ἡμέρᾳ). 3. Chiliasm perverts the scriptural teaching of Christian hope. With its assumption of a still imminent thousand-year kingdom on earth, which is to include a period of peace and a rule of Christians over the unbelieving world, it directs the hope of Christians first to this world, namely to a thousand-year period of peace in this world and a thousand-year rule of Christians over the unbelieving world. The Scriptures are quite different. It describes the way, which is prescribed for all Christians from the apostolic time to the last day, as *via crucis*. Acts 14:22: "We must (δεῖ ημᾶς) enter the kingdom of God through much tribulation." Rest and its reward follow only in heaven. Thus Christ in the Beatitudes Matt. 5:3 ff. V. 3: "Blessed are the spiritually poor, for the kingdom of heaven (ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν) is theirs." V. 12: "Be joyful and confident, you will be well rewarded in heaven (ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς)." And when Paul Phil. 3:20-21 sums up with all Christians and describes their common future hope, he also does not mention a thousand-year period of peace and reign on earth, but says: "Our citizenship (πολίτευμα) is in heaven, from whence also we wait for the Savior Jesus Christ, the Lord, who shall transfigure our vain body."

And now the effect of chiliasm on the spiritual life of Christianity. Chiliasm's distortion of Christian hope is very harmful and dangerous to the spiritual life of Christians. Where chiliasm is taken seriously, that is, enters the heart, it distracts the heart and mind from the hidden spiritual glory of the Christian life, which consists in the certainty of the forgiveness of sins and the future heavenly inheritance, and puts in its place the expectation of an external and earthly greatness. It devalues such powerful and glorious words as these: "Peace I leave you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives" and: "These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world ye are afraid; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Chiliasm is not satisfied with "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you," but wants the kingdom of God to come with outward gestures, and that one may say, Behold, there it is! In short, the Scriptures do not teach Chiliasm, but warn against it.¹⁸⁰⁰⁾

The general conversion of the Jews. Chiliasm is usually bound up with the opinion of a future general conversion of the Jews. Luthardt in his Dogmatik, p. 406 f.: "When, according to the prophecy of Christ, the church shall have spread over the whole world of nations, according to Rom. 11 the hour shall also strike for the conversion of Israel." At the same time, Luthardt charges Luther and "the majority of Lutheran exegetes and dogmatists" with not paying attention to the "whole" in the passage Rom. 11:26: "All Israel will be saved" (πας Ισραήλ σωθήσεται), "seek to evade it by reinterpretation." The advocates of a general conversion of the Jews usually have it in themselves to ascribe to themselves the greater exegetical meticulousness and to take "exegetical measures of violence" to the other side. So also Philippi in the Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, p. 637, before he recants in an "Addition" to the third edition, p. 552 ff. In the American

1800) On the literature on chiliasm: Walther, L. u. W. 1872, p. 97 ff.: "Do the church fathers really teach a so-called biblical chiliasm?" Theo. Brohm, Der Lutheraner, 1847, p. 11: "Is modern chiliasm compatible with the 17th Art. of the Augsb. Konf, vereinbar?" (Brief but very careful elucidation of this question.) L. u. W. 1860, pp. 208 ff: "The so-called millennial kingdom." On further literature one may consult the theological encyclopedias, e.g., the article by Semisch, RE.² III, 194 ff. which, revised by Bratke, also appears in RE.³ III, 805 ff.

Lutheran Church it has shown the same manner. Voigt says in *Bibl. Dogmatics*, p. 231: "It is a violent exegesis which would transfer these promises, the constant theme of the prophets, to a spiritual Israel. Nor can the distinct prediction of the conversion of Israel by St. Paul in Rom. 11:11-29 be turned from God's ancient people to a spiritual Israel, that is" (?), "Christians generally." But Philippi, as said, recanted and admits that Rom. 11:26 f. according to wording and context does not speak for, but against a still future general conversion of Jews. Walther has proved this even more thoroughly in *Lehre und Wehre* 1859, p. 307 ff. First of all, the representatives of the general conversion of the Jews do not allow the expression "all Israel" to come into its own. Those who refer "all Israel" to Israel according to the flesh must not allow themselves, with Luthardt, the interpretation: "Not all individuals, but Israel as a whole." Others interpret: Israel "by and large," "very many" from Israel; Voigt limits "all Israel" even from representatives of Israel, "enough of them to *represent* the race." (l. c.) There are scriptural passages where "whole" is used in a weakened meaning for "in the whole", "very many" etc. (Luke 3:21). But this version of "whole" is excluded here by the contrast in which it stands to "in part". Especially this version is excluded for the representatives of the general conversion of the Jews. According to their position, they assume two Jewish periods: a first one next to the Gentile period, in which Israel is only partially hardened and always some of Israel become saved, then a second, chronologically following period, in which "all Israel" becomes saved. They thus bring "whole" into sharpened contrast with "in part". With this contrast, as Philippi also clearly states in his recantation, every possibility of limiting "all of Israel" in the second Jewish period to a part, to "representatives" of Israel etc. ceases. All those who understand "all of Israel" as the carnal Israel in Rom. 11:26 must renounce every limitation of this term and understand it as all "individual Israelites", not excluding one individual. And they must go even further. To the whole Israel according to the flesh belong not only all individual Jews living at the end of the world, but also all Jews who have already died before. Therefore, only those who, like Petersen († 1727) in the assumed second Jewish period,

assume a resurrection and conversion of all Jews who had previously died in unbelief are consistent.¹⁸⁰¹⁾ Only then do they really have 'all Israel after the flesh. Those who do not want this doctrine have lost the right to appeal to Rom. 11:26 for their opinion. Therefore it stands that the *πας* *Ισραήλ* in this passage is only used by those who, together with Luther and the majority of Lutheran exegetes, really understand it to mean the whole of Israel, namely the whole of spiritual Israel, the whole number of the elect from Israel. This version of spiritual or elect Israel is required by the wording in several ways: 1. "All Israel" (*πας* *Ισραήλ*) stands in parallel with the "fullness of the heathen (*τό πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν*). Now as the fullness of the Gentiles does not denote all the Gentiles who are Gentiles according to the flesh, but the total number of the elect from the Gentiles, so also "all Israel" denotes the total number of the elect from Israel. In other words, all Israel is saved in the same sense and to the same extent as the fullness of the heathen. Whoever does not want to teach that all who are heathen according to the flesh will be saved, that is, that no heathen will be lost at all, must also not assume that the whole of Israel in the flesh is meant here by "all Israel."¹⁸⁰²⁾ The relationship to spiritual Israel is required by the fact that the apostle explicitly states the way in which all Israel will be saved. In the whole passage from v. 11 on, the apostle argues against Gentile Christians who, in their superiority over the Jews, think that by accepting the heathen the whole Israelite people is hardened and rejected. In contrast, Paul clarifies the situation by saying that Israel's hardening is not over the whole people, but only partial (*πῶρως ἀπο μέρους τοῦ Ἰσραήλ γέγονεν*),

1801) A detailed list of the writings of Joh. Wilh. Petersen and the numerous counter writings in Walch, *Bibliotheca Theol.* II, 803 sqq. about Petersen's life and doctrines Walch, *Gesch. d. Religionsstreit. d. luth. K.* II, 586 ff. On Spener's relations to Petersen see H. Schmid, *Gesch. d. Pietismus*, p. 258 f. Wagenmann on Petersen RE.² XI, 499 ff.

1802) Meyer et al. admittedly assume a conversion also of all heathens before the end of the world, which then necessarily, as Philippi, op. cit. p. 555, proves, turns into Origen's and Petersen's doctrine of apocatastasis. Thomasius, too, III, 2, 465, thinks of a conversion of the whole Gentile world, but then limits: "whereby, however, one need not necessarily think either of all individuals or of a real conversion of the hearts of all". According to this, there would be an entrance of the heathen into the Christian church without "true conversion of the heart"!

until fullness of the heathen shall have come in (αχρις ον το πλήρωμα των εϋτών εϊοέλθῃ), and so, καί ὁντως — in this way, that Israel's hardening is not total, but only partial, "all Israel" will be saved, namely the Israel that is not hardened, but believes. So also Philippi in his recantation: "Partially Israel is hardened to the entrance of the Gentile plague, and in this way, namely, that out of the only partially hardened people a great gathering of believers takes place continually until the end of days, in this way the whole Israel, actually referred to by the Old Testament word of God, as the passage from the prophets cited immediately proves,¹⁸⁰³⁾ will be saved." This proof of the relation of "all Israel" from the whole chosen people from Israel can be evaded by the representatives of the general, yet future conversion of the Jews only by allowing themselves to substitute for "and therefore" (καὶ οὕτως) "and then" (καὶ τότε), that is, by allowing themselves to transform the modality determination into a time determination.¹⁸⁰⁴⁾ The objection that the αχρις ον, "until" (in the words, "until the fullness of the heathen has come in"), implies a reference from an event that is yet to come is an

1803) The Old Testament passages cited by the apostle, Is. 59:20 and Jer. 31:33 f., do not deal with the very last time before the end of the world, but with the whole time of the New Testament, which began with Christ's appearance in the flesh. The passages also do not address a general salvation of Israel, but a salvation of those who are converted from Israel. Even rationalists like Rückert and Meyer admit this, but think that the apostle was mistaken, as he often is, in his reasoning from the Old Testament. First they erroneously ascribe to the apostle a general conversion of the Jews taking place at the last end of the world, and then they accuse him of false reasoning from the Old Testament, because he cites passages for the conversion of all fleshly Israel, which only dealt with spiritual Israel. Cf. Walther, L. u. W. 1859, p. 227; Quenstedt II, 1817.

1804) Against this interchange of terms cf. Otto, quoted by Stöckhardt on this passage [Römerbrief, p. 542 f.; Stöckhardt-Schade p. 406]; also Stöckhardt himself. Philippi against Meyer: "The οντως, does not simply summarize what has been said before in the sense of 'and then,' even in the passages from the classics cited by Meyer (Thuc. 3, 96 2; Xen., Anab. 3, 5, 6; cf. moreover Xen., Cyrop. 2, 1, 1; Hellen. 2, 3, 6), but it always emphatically emphasizes the modality indicated in the preceding, under which the occurrence of what follows happens or has happened, will happen or should happen. So also in the New Testament passages: Acts 7:8; 17:33; 20:11; 27:44; 28:14; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 7:36; 11:28; 14:25; 1 Thess. 4:17; Heb. 6:15."

arbitrary assertion. Very correctly Philippi says that αχρις ου in itself denotes only the term up to which an action or occurrence is supposed to last. Likewise Walther: "The particle αχρις ου, until, retains its natural meaning to designate the terminus of a fact." What is said by the "until" is no more and no less than the fact that the hardening of Israel, which is not total, but only partial, and thus the partial conversion of Israel, continues until the fullness of the heathen has come in. Walther: "Jews shall be converted as long as heathen are converted." But that the Gentile times will last until the end of the world, Christ states very certain in Matt. 24:14: "The gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." Luke 21:24: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the heathen, until (αχρις ου) the times of the heathen be fulfilled," is also arbitrarily entered a Jewish period following; for the words following, v. 26 ff, deal with the signs of the end of the world without mention of a Jewish period. In our place, Rom. 11:25. 26, the thought of a Jewish period still following the Gentile period is expressly rejected by the fact that the statement, "All Israel shall be saved," is not connected with καί τότε, but with καί ὁντως, We must say: As certainly as καί ὁντως means "and so," "in this way," so certainly the conversion of all Israel is thereby described as an event which proceeds simultaneously with the only partial hardening of Israel and the entrance of the fullness of the heathen. Walther is right when he says: "So nothing remains but to look for in the immediately preceding words the description of the way in which that happens which Paul says in the words that all Israel will be saved. With the little word, so, the apostle has cut off all self-made thoughts about the a saving of all Israel, and has pointed the reader to his own preceding words." The further objection that the apostle would not have used the word "mystery" if he had only meant to say that during the whole Gentile period all faithful Israel would be saved, is settled by the reference to Eph. 3:3 ff, where Paul also calls the entrance of the heathen into the Christian church a mystery made known to him by divine ' revelation (κατά ἀποκάλυψιν ἐγνώρισ'θη μοι το μυστήριον) although this fact is abundantly

is attested in the Old Testament. Walther makes the following apt remark concerning the use of the word "mystery": "It is true, to us who have an eighteen-hundred-year history of the Christian Church behind us, who still have the Jewish people before our eyes, who know of Jewish conversions from all ages and countries, who see how God still keeps His covenant with Israel today: to us this no longer seems a great mystery, any more than the wickedness of the Antichrist revealed to us by the Reformation. But if we put ourselves in the soul of the Roman Gentile Christians to whom Paul wrote, it will soon become clear to us that what the apostle proclaimed in advance of Israel's abiding and entrance into Christ's kingdom until the Last Day must be an unexpected, great, admirable mystery to them. ... This mystery consists in the fact that the people of the Jews will never fall completely into hardening, that their hardening will always remain only a partial one, so that as long as Gentiles are converted, Jews will also be converted, so that as long as the time of grace of the Gentiles will last, the time of grace of the Jews will also last, and thus there will never come a time when only Gentiles will enter the kingdom of Christ. ... In this glorious, admirable and adorable way, out of God's incomprehensible faithfulness, truthfulness, mercy, patience and longsuffering, all Israel, which He had provided before (v. 2), will be saved, not one soul, not even one, excepted. Will ye then be proud any further, ye Gentile Christians?" — Finally, it should be pointed out that the relation of "all Israel" to carnal Israel also conflicts with the broader context, namely, with the apostle's entire exposition from ch. 9 onward. Ch. 9, 1-5 the apostle intones his shattering lamentation over Israel's unbelief and perishing. He has desired to be banished from Christ for his brethren according to the flesh. Immediately afterwards, however, he states that the unbelief and perishing of the great mass of Israel does not stand as if the promise given to Israel had fallen away. As a reason for this he states that not all who are children according to the flesh are also God's children, but only the children of the promise are counted as Abraham's seed. The apostle also clearly states in ch. 9:27 ff. that out of the great number of Israel in the flesh (out of Israel "like the sand of the sea") only a remnant (κατάλειμμα) will be saved. After the apostle

has explained in ch. 9:30 ff. and ch. 10 that everything depends on faith and that Israel refused to believe despite God's efforts for the disobedient people, he again raises the question in ch. 11:1 whether God had rejected Israel as it seemed. Paul denies this, but again justifies the denial by saying that, as in Elijah's day, so also now an elect people believe and are saved, v. 7: "The election obtains it; the others are hardened." From v. 11 on, Paul, the official apostle to the Gentiles, becomes the advocate of Israel, because the Gentile Christians, in their self-conceit, thought (vv. 17-24) that with their calling into the kingdom of God, Israel was excluded from salvation. In contrast, Paul takes the whole passage up to v. 32 to show that the time of salvation of the heathen is also the time of salvation of Israel. The apostle immediately expresses this thought in v. 11 by declaring in a very certain way: "The fact that salvation has happened to the Gentiles does not have the purpose of excluding Israel from salvation, but on the contrary, the purpose is to provoke Israel to emulation through the example of the faithful heathen and thus to make them partakers of salvation. Hence the apostle's practice that in directing his apostleship to the Gentiles he also at the same time keeps in view the Jews, whether he would stir them to emulation and make some of them (τινάς ἐξ αὐτῶν) saved. To all particularistic thoughts of the heathen, according to which they want to exclude Israel from salvation, he finally opposes the sentence, v. 32: "God has resolved all (πάπας under sin, that he might have mercy on all." In this state of affairs, the result is that as "the fullness of the heathen," that is, all the chosen people from among the heathen, so also "all Israel," that is, all the chosen people from among Israel, will be saved.^{1805a)}

1805a) For the literature on a general conversion of Jews that is still imminent, see Walther, "[Der Lutheraner](#)" 13, 85 ff: "Von der Hoffnung einer noch bevorstehenden allgemeinen Bekehrung." The same, [L. u. W. 1859, pp. 307 ff. 331 ff.](#) [Ed. sic — [321 ff.](#)]: "Is Rom. 11:25- 27 taught of a yet expected solenn conversion of the Jews?" Both articles are very carefully worked and belong to the most thorough treatises on this question. In the "[Lutheran](#)" article, Walther first presents dogma-historically what the Lutheran teachers thought of a general conversion of the Jews. He divides the Lutheran teachers into three parts: 1. those who at first expressed support for an imminent general conversion of the Jews but later recanted, 2. those who never shared this hope, 3. those who taught the general conversion of the Jews as either probable or certain. Walther then goes on to discuss the chief places in Scripture in favor of chiliasm in general and of a

The lesson that the apostle gives to the Gentile Christians in Rom. 11 should also be taken to heart by the Christians of our time. It is easy to think that God's grace has ceased over the people who crucified the Savior of the world in their ancestors. And especially among those who teach a future general conversion of the Jews, there are more than questionable statements about this. Luthardt (on Rom. 11 in Zöckler's commentary) addresses a "special spell of judgment" that is presently upon Israel. He says, "The presence of Israel is that of the πῶρῳσις." This is an error! According to the apostle's express explanation, the presence of Israel is not that of the πῶρῳσις, but of the πῶρῳσις only in part, and Paul's words, "God hath concluded all among unbelievers, that he might have mercy on all," apply to the Jews of all ages to the end of the world. Walther aptly says: "May the Jews after all have crucified and rejected their own Messiah — according to the mystery unlocked by the apostle, Jews shall be converted as long as heathens are converted. Not only shall the door of grace stand open to both to the end, but a number of both shall always truly enter the kingdom of God." Perhaps the assertion is correct that since the first Pentecost as many Jews as heathens have been converted to Christ, if we compare the relatively small number of Jews with the large number of heathens. However, this may remain undecided. But we are certain from the Scriptures that the door of grace stands no less open to the Jews than it does to the heathen, and that God has scattered the Jews among

general conversion of the Jews in particular, and shows that this doctrine is not contained in them. The article in "L. u. W." deals in detail with Rom. 11:25 ff. and deals with the opinions of newer theologians about this passage. Among the old Lutheran theologians, Calov treats the general conversion of the Jews very extensively and thoroughly in his *Biblia Illustrata* on Rom. 11:25. Calov also offers a history of the exposition among the church fathers, the Romans, the Reformed and the Lutherans. Philippi confesses to the result of Calov's exposition after his recantation. Among the old theologians we still refer to Gerhard, *L. de extremo iud.*, § 111; Quenstedt II, 1812 sqq.; Hollaz, *Examen, De iud. extr.* 16. As for the newer theologians who advocate a general conversion of the Jews, one finds all the essentials compiled if one reads, for example, Tholuck, Meyer, Luthardt, Hodge, Alford and Philippi (before his recantation) on Rom. 11:25. Cf. on the literature also Walther's documentary proof against Dr. Seiß, [Seiss] that Papias, Justin, Irenaeus, etc. taught a crude chiliasm, "L. u. W." 1872, p. 97 ff.

the heathen, not to exclude them from salvation, but to provoke them to believe, through the testimony and example of faithful Christians, that in Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah of the Jews and the Savior of the world has appeared. Only with this knowledge will we take the right inner and outer position against Israel. On the other hand, the opinion, contrary to Scripture, that the presence of Israel is one of hardening and that the "ban of judgment" will be lifted only later, can by its nature only have a harmful effect on Christians and Jews. On the one hand, it will prevent Christians from witnessing with confidence to the Jews about the gospel; on the other hand, it is apt to turn the attention of the Jews away from the gospel which they are now to hear in the dispersion and believe according to God's will, and to direct it to a future time. This pernicious effect is increased when the future picture is further enriched by the setting of Jewish national unity, the return to the land of the fathers, and the reestablishment of the temple worship. Among the many sad consequences of the "World War" is that the so-called "Allies" promised the Jews Palestine as their national homeland. Instead of repenting and believing in the Messiah who has appeared, the Orthodox Jews are now thinking of a return to Palestine and the re-establishment of the Temple worship, the Reform Jews of a spiritual domination of the world through Jewish intellectual superiority and education, by means of the Jewish university to be built on the Mount of Olives.^{1805b)}

4. The resurrection of the dead. [^] (*De resurrectione mortuorum.*)

The fact of the resurrection of the dead is not only doubted by human reason, 1 Cor. 15:35, but also mocked, Acts 17:32. This happens in contradiction with the natural knowledge of God. Since human reason already recognizes

1805b) Cf. Dr. Weizmann's words at the laying of the foundation stone for the Jewish university on the Mount of Olives L. u. W. 1920, p. 93. Also the construction of a temple building is possible, because the Jews have the necessary funds and an exact description of the temple is available in the Old Testament (1 Kings 6 and 2 Chron. 3). But the reestablishment of the temple worship is impossible because it requires priests from the house of Aaron and the tribe of Levi (Ezra 6:62; Neh. 7:64), but the Jewish genealogical registers have been lost. (Cf. Baumgarten, *Glaubenslehre* II, 160 f. Winer, *Realwörterb.* ³ II, 516. Eusebius, *Kirchengesch.* I, 6.)

an almighty God from the works of creation (Rom. 1:19-20), it should at least admit the possibility of the resurrection of the dead. Therefore Paul says of the deniers of the resurrection 1 Cor. 15:34: "Some know nothing of God" and Christ Matth, 22:29: You do not know "the power of God". As far as the Holy Scriptures are concerned, the resurrection of the dead is not only consistently taught as a certain fact in the New Testament,¹⁸⁰⁶⁾ but is also already clearly testified in the Old Testament. To the Sadducees, who had only the Old Testament Scriptures, Christ exhibits the testimony that they did not know the Scriptures because of their denial of the resurrection of the dead (μη εἰδότες τὰς γραφάς). At the same time, Christ points to a large class of Old Testament passages in which the resurrection of the dead is taught, "Have ye not read of the resurrection of the dead, which is told you of God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? Now God is not a God of the dead, but of the living."¹⁸⁰⁷⁾ So where we find in the Old Testament the divine promise of grace, "I am your God," as in the institution of circumcision, Gen. 17:7, and often,¹⁸⁰⁸⁾ there is taught the resurrection of the dead. The same is to be said of Gen. 3:15. If the seed of the woman is to crush the head of the serpent, thus destroying the devil's dominion and works, then the abolition of death is also promised, as surely as death is merely a consequence of sin, which came into the world through the seduction of the devil. Luther rightly remarks on Genesis 3:15: "This passage contains at the same time the redemption from law, sin and death and shows a clear and certain hope of resurrection and renewal in the other life after this one. For if the serpent's head is to be crushed, death must also be abolished and annihilated."¹⁸⁰⁹⁾ The Christian faith is as old as the first promise of Christ, Genesis 3:15, and includes in itself, as well as salvation from sin, salvation from death. Of course, in more recent times it has become quite common practice to

1806) Joh. 5:28-29; 6:39-40; 1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15 etc.

1807) Matt. 22:31-32. The words are about the resurrection of the dead, περί της ἀναστάσεως τῶν νεκρῶν, as Christ explicitly says, not merely about the survival of souls after death.

1808) Gen. 26:24; 28:13; Ezek. 37:27 etc.

1809) St. L. I, 240. Likewise III, 84 f.; especially in detail in a sermon given in 1526 on Gen. 3:15, III, 650 ff.

allow the belief in the resurrection to develop only very gradually among the "Old Testament pious". Luthardt also says: "In the Old Testament the doctrine of the resurrection emerges only very gradually."¹⁸¹⁰⁾ When asking about the doctrine of resurrection in the Old Testament, one then refers to some passages in the later Old Testament writings, namely Dan. 12:2, also probably to Ps. 17:16 and to "exemplary" passages like Hos. 13:14; Is. 26:19; Ezek. 37; at most also to Job 19:25-27. Likewise Voigt thinks: "The doctrine of resurrection is found only in the later books of the Old Testament."¹⁸¹¹⁾ But this opinion reveals a humiliation of the Old Testament understanding of the doctrine and directly contradicts Christ Himself, who expressly says that in the words of Exodus 3:6, "I am the God of Abraham," etc., the resurrection of the dead is taught.¹⁸¹²⁾ In contrast, Hofmann, under the contradiction of Luthardt, says:¹⁸¹³⁾ "Nothing can be more erroneous than the opinion that the resurrection of the dead is an idea that arose late only through human reflection, the first traces of which, if it did not even come to the Jews from the Parsees, we are to meet in Isaiah and Ezekiel, perhaps also already in the Psalms of David. ... There is no time to be found where faith could be thought without this hope, and no time after the first promise where it could have arisen first. ... Hengstenberg once says that where death was regarded as the punishment of sin, faith in eternal life necessarily had to spring up as soon as the hope of redemption had taken root. The hope of redemption took root, however, when that serious word of God after the sin of the first created said of the victory of mankind" (should mean: of the victory of the woman's seed) "over her deceiver. In this victory also death is swallowed up. But what was promised to mankind, should not the faith of the individual take this into account? If they knew

1810) Dogmatics^{II}, p. 412.

1811) Biblical Dogmatics, p. 239

1812) The author of the article "Resurrection" in the Calwer Bibellexikon thinks himself justified to accuse Christ of wrong exegesis: "What Jesus already reads out of the name 'God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob', that the fellowship of the faithful with God extends beyond death (Matt. 22 32), that was generally still hidden to these men themselves and to the believers of the Old Covenant in general. According to this, Christ would have unjustly reproached the Sadducees for not knowing the Scriptures."

1813) Dogmatik, p. 412.

that their sin was forgiven, how could they but take comfort in the hope that they would not abide in death?"¹⁸¹⁴⁾

That the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead belongs to the fundamental doctrines, without whose acceptance the Christian faith cannot exist, is clearly expressed in Scripture. It says of Hymenaeus and comrades, who accepted the resurrection of the dead as having already happened, thus denying the bodily resurrection on the Last Day, that they lacked the truth (περί την αλήθειαν ἡστόχησαν) and were shipwrecked in the faith" (περί τήν πίστιν ἐνανάγησαν).¹⁸¹⁵⁾

The raising of the dead is never man's work, but in every case a work of divine omnipotence, 2 Cor. 1:9: ὁ θεός ὁ ἐγείρων τοὺς νεκρούς. Rom. 4:17: ὁ θεός ὁ ζωοποιῶν τοὺς νεκρούς καὶ καλῶν τὰ μὴ ὄντα. But because the divine omnipotence belongs to the three persons of the holy Trinity without division and without multiplication, as was set forth at length in the doctrine of God, so also the Son of God says of himself the numerical one act (eandem numero actionem), as of preserving the world,¹⁸¹⁶⁾ so also of raising the dead, John 5:21: "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and maketh them alive, so also the Son maketh alive whom he will." At the same time, Scripture teaches with great emphasis that the divine act of raising the dead and the final judgment takes place through the incarnate Son of God, that is, in and according to the human nature of Christ. Jn. 5:22: "The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son," and indeed v. 27: ὁ ὅτι νῖός ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν, "because He is Son of Man,"¹⁸¹⁷⁾ Therefore also (v. 28) let no one be surprised at the fact that the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear His — the Son of Man's — voice. According to the divine economy, it stands that the Redeemer of the world is also the Reviver of the dead and the judge of the world. Just as the Son of God did not become the sin-bearer of the world as ἀσάρκος, but as ἐνσάρκος, namely in the assumed human nature, and thereby destroyed the works of the

1814) [Schriftbeweis 2 II, 2, p. 490](#); quoted in agreement by Philippi, *Glaubenslehre* VI., 80, note.

1815) 2 Tim. 2:18-19; 1 Tim. 1:19-20.

1816) John 5:17-20.

1817) More detailed exposition [II, 177, and note 370](#).

devil, so also in the assumed human nature the judgment of the world and the preceding raising of the dead takes place "through one man in whom he has decreed it", εν ἀνδρὶ φ ὥρισεν, Acts 17:31. The opinion that the human nature of Christ could not be communicated the actions (*actiones*) of the Godhead is found in Reformed writings, but not in Holy Scriptures.¹⁸¹⁸⁾

To the question who will be resurrected (*subiectum quod resurrectionis*), Scripture answers: All men, not only the believers but also the unbelieving, John 5:28: Πάντες οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις, and Paul before Felix, Acts 24:15: ἀνάστασιν μέλλειν εοεσῶαι δικαίων τε καὶ ἀδίκων. As is well known, the resurrection of unbelievers has been denied in ancient and modern times.¹⁸¹⁹⁾ But it is different with the bodily resurrection than with the spiritual. Christ's request for spiritual resurrection in the time of grace, that is, for faith in the gospel,¹⁸²⁰⁾ can be resisted,¹⁸²¹⁾ because in the time of grace Christ works through means. Christ's call to bodily resurrection on the Last Day must be obeyed by all men, because here Christ appears εν τῇ δόξῃ αὐτοῦ, in revealed majesty, and therefore works *efficacia irresistibili*.¹⁸²²⁾ — To the question of what is resurrected (*subiectum quo resurrectionis*), Scripture answers: That which is of men "in the graves," that is, men according to their bodies. The identity with the bodies that men have had on earth is already stated by the expression "resurrection," ἀνάστασις. That stands up and becomes alive which before had fallen down and was dead. *Vox ἀναπαύσεως importat iteratam stationem eius, quod ante steterat et ceciderat*. He who denies the numerical identity of the dead and resurrected bodies denies *eo ipso* the resurrection of the dead. Just as the instantaneous transformation (ἀλλαγοόμεν) of those living on the

1818) Cf. [II, 273 ff.](#)

1819) Cf. the antithesis in Gerhard, *L. de resurrectione*, §100-102; in [Günther, Symbolik 4, p. 422](#) f. (Socinians, Adventists, Russellites, Christadelphians) [See *Popular Symbolics*, pp. [132](#), [357](#), [419](#), [416](#).] . Strong, *Syst. Theol.*, 1016, against Stevens, *Pauline Theol.*, p. 357.

1820) Matt. 11:29: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden."

1821) Matt. 23:37: "You have not wanted."

1822) Matt. 25:31-32.

Last Day ¹⁸²³⁾ does not abolish the identity of the bodies, neither does the resurrection of the dead. Concerns like these: Components of the body disintegrated into dust had passed into other bodies, etc., are covered by Christ's Word: "Ye know not the power of God." But the bodies of the pious will be of a spiritual nature, σώματα πνευματικά,¹⁸²⁴⁾ What is to be understood by a "spiritual body" we cannot, of course, determine speculatively, but can only learn from the revelation of Scripture. In Scripture the resurrection bodies are described as as imperishable, glorious, full of vitality, in contrast to their nature in this life: ἐγείρεται ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ — ἐν δόξῃ — ἐν δυνάμει, 1 Cor. 15:42-43. The "glorious" is still further explained in Phil. 3:21: "similar (σύμμορφον) to the transfigured body of Christ", and Matt. 13:43: "the righteousness will shine like the sun." The "equal to the angels" (ἰσάγγελοι, Luke 20:36; ὡς ἄγγελοι, Matt. 22:30) receives its closer definition from the appended: "They shall neither free nor be freed." So angelicity is not to be extended to incorporeality nor from sexlessness. With respect to sexlessness Baier correctly says: *Recipient sexum et partes seu membra omnia, quae in hac vita habuerunt, licet non ad veterem usum redintegrandum, tamen ad integritatem corporis organici.* [Google]¹⁸²⁵⁾ Since seed and harvest, food and clothing, etc., cease with this course of the world, then — as Luther expresses it¹⁸²⁶⁾ — the spiritual body "will no longer be an eating, sleeping, digesting body, but will be spiritually fed and sustained by God, and will even have life in it."¹⁸²⁷⁾ As far as the body size (stature) of the resurrected is concerned, the opinion of those who assume that everyone will be resurrected in the stature

1823) 1 Cor. 15:51. 52.

1824) 1 Cor. 15:44: Σπείρεται σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν.

1825) *Comp. ed.* Walther II, 248. Likewise Luther IX, 122: "The body in its nature remains, but not the same custom of the body."

1826) St. L. IX, 1243.

1827) Cf. op. cit. Luther's explanation of the "natural body," σῶμα ψυχικόν, which is also classical from a linguistic point of view: "The word *animale corpus*, which we have interpreted as 'a natural body,' comes from the Hebrew nephesh, anima, and means not only a matter of man, as we Germans call the soul, but means the whole man, as he lives in the five senses and must maintain himself with food, drink, house and farm, wife and child." So correctly also Meyer on this passage

in which he died is the more probable.¹⁸²⁸⁾ In the pious, of course, all bodily defects (*deformitas*), even the traces of old age, will be erased, because all bodily defects, even growing old, are only a consequence of sin. Because in the unbelievers the sin remains in a solidified measure, so also in their bodies the consequences of the sin (the *deformitas*) will be more sharply pronounced than in this life.¹⁸²⁹⁾

5. The final judgment. [^] (*De indicio extremo*)

The visible appearance of Christ and the raising of the dead are directly linked to the Last Judgment. The description of the glorious visible appearance of Christ in Matt. 25:31 is immediately followed by the words: "Then (τότε) shall he sit upon the throne (θρόνος) of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη): and he shall separate them one from another (ἀφοριεῖ), even as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, and shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left." That according to the divine economy Christ, in His human nature irradiated by the divine glory, will be the judge of the world, has already been stated under the preceding section.

As objects of judgment the Scriptures name all men, pious and impious,¹⁸³⁰⁾ dead and living,¹⁸³¹⁾ besides men also the evil angels.¹⁸³²⁾

1828) Revelation 20:12: "I saw the dead, both great and small (μικροὺς καὶ μεγάλους), standing before God." Cf. on this whole passage the detailed dogma-historical and exegetical treatise in Gerhard, *L. de resurr.* under the section *De materia resurr.*, § 67-90.

1829) Gerhard presents it this way, 1. c., § 52: *Quodsi in hac vita malefici ac facinorosi tetrico vultu de occulta cordium suorum impietate testantur*, "der Mord und Diebstahl stehet ihnen aus den Augen", *quanto magis in damnatorum corporibus ac faciebus maculae ineluibiles peccatorum apparebunt*. [[Google](#)]

1830) 2 Cor. 5:10: "We must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive" (κομίσηται, carry away) "after he has acted in bodily life, whether good or evil." Rom. 14:10: "We shall all be presented before the judgment seat of Christ."

1831) Acts 10:42: "He [Jesus of Nazareth] is ordained (ὀρισμένος) of God a judge of the living and the dead."

1832) 2 Pet. 2:4: "God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them out to hell with chains of darkness and delivered them up to be kept for judgment" (παρέδωκεν εἰς κρίσιν τετηρημένους).

As that by which is judged (*norma indicii*), the Scripture calls the works of men, 2 Cor. 6:10: *προς α επραξεν [έκαστος], είτε άγαθόν είτε κακόν.*¹⁸³³) But the pious are judged only according to their good works, because these works are testimonies of their faith in Christ; the evil works of believers, because they are cast into the depths of the sea by justification (Micah 7:19), thus forgiven, will not be drawn to light again even on the Last Day. This is also expressed in Matt. 25:31-40, where only good works are mentioned in the judgment of the rightly placed, no evil works are mentioned. The view expressed by some Lutheran theologians (albeit with all kinds of limitations) that the evil works of believers will also be brought to light in the final judgment can only be called a whimsical one. If we reject this whimsical view, which is contrary to Scripture, two series of Scripture statements, which seem to contradict each other, are thus harmonized according to Scripture. The Scriptures, however, state two things in the most certain way: 1. that all men, including believers, will be judged:¹⁸³⁴) 2. that believers will not be included in the

As is well known, it has been disputed whether 1 Cor. 6:3: "Do you not know that we will judge the angels" (*αγγέλους*, angels) means bad or good angels. Cf. Calov and Meyer on this passage. Meyer understands good angels here and claims for himself the stricter exegesis, because "angels" without further definition always denotes good angels. But Meyer forgets the generally accepted exegetical rule that the predicate determines both the subject and the object in more detail. The predicate "to judge" determines the object "angel" more closely as one to which sin is attached, that is, as evil angels. Meyer himself looks for a more detailed definition for his "good angels" and finds it in Hebr. 1:14, where it is said that the good angels have to do service to the Christians, for which they have to be "responsible". But the general term "responsible" is not sufficient for Meyer's train of thought. He must convert the general term into the certain term that the good angels sin in their service. Thus, in order to gain a suitable object for the predicate "to judge," he himself returns to the interpretation which he rejects of the "most" as unexegetical. In vain Meyer appeals to Gal. 1:8, where "in a set case" the good angels would meet the *άνάθεμα*. We are not dealing here with a set case, but with reality: *αγγέλους κρινούμεν*, we will judge angels. Christians judge insofar as they participate in all that Christ does.

1833) Specialization of good and evil works Matt. 25:35-40. 42-45: 12:36: *παν ρήμα άργόν.*

1834) The passages mentioned above, Rom. 14:10: "We" — the apostle speaks in the name of all Christians — "will all be presented before the judgment seat of Christ" etc.

judgment at all.¹⁸³⁵⁾ Holtzmann gives up the possibility of harmonizing these two series of scriptural statements. He also assumes here, as in the case of justification and sanctification, that the apostle Paul has two "unharmonized" series of thoughts and speaks of a "gaping contradiction".¹⁸³⁶⁾ Meyer harmonizes in such a way that he first lets the believers themselves come into judgment and then become fellow-judges of Christ.¹⁸³⁷⁾ But of this "first" and "then" the Scripture knows nothing. Scripturally, the harmonization happens in this way: Because in the judgment of the pious only their good, but not their evil works come into consideration, as we clearly see from Matt. 25:35-40, this is identical to the statement of Christ that everyone who believes in Him does not come into judgment at all (Joh. 3:18; 5:24). A procedure in which evil works are not considered, but only good works done are praised, has lost the character of judgment. In still other words, the harmonization of those two sets of scriptural passages occurs through the distinction of law and gospel. Gerhard remarks: "The legal sayings must be distinguished from the actually Evangelical ones. To the law belongs: 'Men must give account in that day of every useless word'; to the gospel belongs: 'He who believes does not come into judgment.' To the law belongs: 'You heap wrath upon yourself in the day of God's righteousness'; to the gospel belongs: 'Lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.'" ¹⁸³⁸⁾ Because believers are forgiven of their sins, the law is not norma iudicii for them, but the gospel, that is, they are not judged at all. — It has been objected why believers in this life would still be held up to words of the law such as these: "We shall all be presented before the judgment seat of Christ"? The answer to this is: Just as the law is necessary and useful to believers in general because of the flesh still clinging to them, so in particular are the words of the law concerning the judgment of the Last Day. Through these words of the law they are to be warned against carnal security and kept in the knowledge of their sins.

1835) Joh. 3:18: "he who believes in the Son [of God] will not be judged", ον κρίνεται; Joh. 5:24: "he does not come into judgment", εις κρίσιον ονκ ερχεται.

1836) Neutestamentl. Theol. II, 223.

1837) To 1 Cor. 6:2.

1838) *L. de extremo iudicio*, § 65.

When this purpose has been achieved, that is, when they recognize their sin in daily repentance and flee in faith to Christ as their redeemer from sin, they will be judged according to the words: "Christ is the end of the law," that is, also of judgment; "he who believes in him will not be judged. Luther: "Judgment is abolished; it concerns the believer as little as it concerns the angels. ... All believers pass from this life without judgment into the kingdom of heaven, and become judges of others still."¹⁸³⁹⁾ — It has been rightly pointed out that the judgment of the Last Day is not to be imagined as a long discussion (*iudicium discussionis*) with a subsequent separation of the pious and the ungodly. According to Matt. 25:32, the separation of the pious and the ungodly precedes all discussion or explanation.

6. The end of the World. [^] (*De consummatione mundi*)

That heaven and earth, that is, the world created by God "in the beginning" (Gen. 1), will pass away or perish, the Scripture explicitly says. Luke 21:33: "Heaven and earth will pass away", ο ουρανός και η γη παρελεύσονται. Heb. 1:10-12 is quoted Ps. 102:26-28: "You, Lord, from the beginning founded the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands. These will pass away (ἀπολούνται); ... they shall all pass away as a garment; and as a garment thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed" (ἀλλαγήσονται, they shall be changed). And indeed, heaven and earth will pass away and be transformed in distinction from God who remains (συ δε διαμένεις, v. 11), and in distinction from Christ's words which do not pass away (οι δε λόγοι μου ου μη παρελεύσονται) Luke 21:33). Whether this passing away is to be described more closely as a total annihilation (*interitus mundi secundum substantiam*, κατ' ουσίαν) or only as a transformation or transfiguration (*interitus mundi secundum accidentia*, κατὰ ποιότητα), even the old Lutheran theologians do not agree. Luther, Brenz, Althammer, Phil. Nicolai and others teach a transformation, mainly on the basis of Rom. 8:21.¹⁸⁴⁰⁾ Most of the old Lutheran theologians hold

1839) St. L. VII, 1974. 1975.

1840) Και αυτή ή κτίσις ἐλευθερωθήσεται από τής δονλείας φθοράς εις την ελευθερίαν τής δόξης των τέκνων τον θεοῦ. Luther (St. L. XII, 729 f.;

with Gerhard, Quenstedt and Calov, an end of the world quoad substantiam. Gerhard treats the question in great detail.¹⁸⁴¹⁾ He lets both sides have their say with their arguments and counter-arguments and then gives the reasons why he considers an end of the world as corresponding to the scriptural words.¹⁸⁴²⁾ Nevertheless Gerhard says:¹⁸⁴³⁾ " We do not defend the opinion of

 Erl.² 9, 117. 108 f.): "It is very comfortingly spoken that Paul draws in the whole creature, as into one person, who with us have a desire to come out of this life into another. That we know for certain that we do not yet live as we ought, but wait for another life, which shall be our right life; as the sun waits for another adornment, which it shall have, together with the earth and all other creatures, that it may be cleansed from all the abuses of the devil and of the world. But this, he says, will happen when the children of God are revealed. Now on earth they are already God's children, but they are not yet in their glory, just as the sun is not yet in its true glory, because it is subject to vanity; but it wants to wait for the end, which is presented to it, when its service is to end; From this she waits, together with the whole creature and all the saints, with vain groaning, and remains subject to vanity, that is, to the devil and the evil world, for God's sake alone, who has subjected her, but in the hope that it will not last forever." — Brenz (*Homil. 53. in Lucam*): *Num coelum et terra ita transibunt, ut nihil eorum omnino maneat? Minime omnium. Non transibunt omnino, sed mutabuntur. Abiciunt vestimentum corruptionis et induent novam vestem incorruptionis, futura quidem coeli ac terrae mutatio, non autem in totum abolitio.* [[Google](#)] Other quotations in Gerhard, *L. de consummatione seculi*, § 38. To the words of Luther cited above, however, passages such as St. L. VIII, 1187 ff.

1841) *L. de consummatione seculi*, § 37-63.

1842) The main mistake of those who want to prove from Rom. 8 a mere transfiguration of the creature, Gerhard sees in the fact that they do not pay proper attention to the word "service" (δουλεία) in the statement that "also the creature will become free from the service of the perishable being to the glorious freedom of the children of God". They interpreted it as if the apostle were saying that the creature should be set free from the corruptible being (*corruptio*), whereas the apostle's statement only refers to a deliverance from the service (*servitus*) of the corruptible being. *Addimus*, says Gerhard, *apostolum nequaquam dicere, quod liberanda sit creatura a corruptione, quae phrasis substantiali interitui opposita videri poterat, sed a servitute corruptionis, quae eidem minime adversatur.* [[Google](#)] What the personified creature longs to be freed from is the service of the perishable being. This liberation from service, however, could not only happen through the transfiguration (*renovatio*), but also through the fact that the creature ceases to exist. For example, Gerhard recalls Seneca's words to Marcia that through death man is granted freedom from all evils, although Seneca maintains his opinion that man ceases to exist with death. Similarly, Calov argues on this passage.

1843) *l. c.*, § 38.

the end of the world in essence as an article of faith, but we say that this opinion corresponds more to the emphatic scriptural statements which deal with the end of the world. It also follows that we do not hastily accuse those who are of the opposite opinion and describe the end of the world as a transformation of heresy. For this reason many would rather take a hand to their mouths (ἐπέχειν) on this question, and leave this matter to future experience, than fix anything certain."¹⁸⁴⁴ All who suppose a transformation of creatures must teach such a transformation, whereby the world in all its present manifestation¹⁸⁴⁵ will really pass away or have an end (τέλος) at the Last Day. So also Luther: "Summa, everything shall cease, which is of this temporal goods essence, so belongs to the perishable life and works."¹⁸⁴⁶

7. Eternal damnation. ^ (*De damnatione aeterna*)

That there is a damnation that comes upon men because of their sins after this life is also still recognized to some extent from the light of nature. This knowledge is from the area of the law, and the law also operates in the natural man not only in its standardizing, but also in its judging and condemning power.¹⁸⁴⁷ We therefore find among the heathen the doctrine of Hades with its rebuke after this life.¹⁸⁴⁸ Holy Scriptures teach the fact of

1844) Among the Lutheran teachers, Gerhard names Heerbrand, Mylius, Hutter, Balthasar Meisner and others as those who do not want to establish anything certain.

1845) 1 Cor. 7:31: "The being (σχήμα) of this world is passing away."

1846) St. L. VIII, 1222.

1847) Rom. 2:15: Ἐνδείκνυνται το ἐργον τον νόμον γραπτόν εν ταῖς καρδίαις αντών, ονμμαρτηρονης αντών τῆς οννειδήσεως και μεταξύ άλλήλων των λογισμών κατηγορούντων ἡ και ἀπολογονμένων.

1848) Philippi quotes on Rom. 1:32 from Aeschylus' Eumenides v. 259 to 265:

"Ὅψει δε κεῖ τις άλλον ἤλιτεν βροτών,

"Ἡ θεόν ἡ ξένον τιν' ασεβών,


"Ἡ τοκεας φίλων,

"Ἐχονέκαστον τῆς δίκης επάξια.

Μέγας γάρ Αἰδης εστιν ενθνος βροτών,

"Ἐερθε χ' ἑθονός,

Δελτογράφ δε πάντ' επωπα φρενί.

eternal damnation so clearly and emphatically that it can only be denied if the authority of Scripture is rejected. Scripture places the eternal salvation of believers and the eternal damnation of unbelievers side by side, so that with eternal damnation, eternal salvation would also have to be denied. Matt. 25:46: "They will go into eternal torment (εις κόλασιν αιώνιον), but the righteousness into eternal life (εις ζωὴν αιώνιον)." The same juxtaposition and opposition we have in other passages of Scripture.¹⁸⁴⁹⁾ Thus the calling from the fact that the word "eternity" is also used of a limited duration in Scripture is¹⁸⁵⁰⁾ rejected, and we have therefore to take the predicate "eternal" in all passages of Scripture in which it is used to describe the duration of the punishments of the ungodly,¹⁸⁵¹⁾ in the proper or strict sense, in the sense of "*sine fine*," as the Apology of the Augustana (217, 66 [Trigl. 335, XVII, 66 Christ in consummatione mundi appariturum esse ac mortuos omnes resuscitaturum et piis aeternam vitam et aeterna gaudia daturum, impios vero condemnaturum esse, ut cum diabolo sine fine crucientur. [Google]¹⁸⁵²⁾ That objections have been raised at all times against the eternity of the punishments of hell is explainable, because the thought of a never-ending torment of rational beings endowed with consciousness is a terror beyond all comprehension. "My quite frightened heart trembles that my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth."¹⁸⁵³⁾ But all objections are based on a false principle, namely, the assumption that it is right and reasonable to measure God's being and doing according to distant human thoughts and intentions. This also applies in particular to those who find the eternal damnation of a part of humanity compatible neither with the unity of the divine world plan ("dualism") nor with divine love nor with divine righteousness and therefore want to replace the eternal damnation of a part of humanity with their eventual salvation through gradual improvement in the hereafter or an immediate.

1849) Joh. 3:36 etc.

1850) Ex. 12:14, 24; 21:6 etc.

1851) 2 Thess. 1:9: ὀλεθρος αἰώνιος; Matt. 18:8: το πῦρ το αἰώνιον; Mark. 3:29: αἰώνιος κρίσις.

1852) Art. 16 of the Augustana: *Damnant Anabaptistas, qui sentiunt hominibus damnatis ac diabolis finem poenarum futurum esse.*

1853) St. L. Gesangb. 434, 1.

or later destruction of the wicked.¹⁸⁵⁴⁾ On the other hand, it is to be noted as a general rule that God's nature, attributes and actions lie beyond our human horizon,¹⁸⁵⁵⁾ and we men therefore cannot know *a priori*, but only from God's revelation in the Word, what is consistent with God's nature and attributes in harmony or in contradiction.

The essence (forma) of eternal damnation consists in being eternally rejected from God's presence or, what is the same thing, being eternally banished from the fellowship of God. Matt. 25:41 says in reference to those who are lost, "Depart from me," namely, away from me, πορεύεσθε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, and Matt. 8:12, "They will be cast out (ἐκβληθήσονται) into utter darkness." Man is created for God, that is, for existence in God's fellowship. Therefore, as life in God's fellowship is the highest joy and delight for man,¹⁸⁵⁶⁾ so being cast out from God's presence is binding the greatest torment according to body and soul. To describe the state of damnation, Scripture uses various expressions, but they all denote intense torment according to body and soul: tribulation and anguish, θλίψις καὶ στενοχώρια (Rom. 2:9), being in torment, ὑπάρχειν ἐν βασάνοις (Luke 16:23), suffering torment in the flame, ὀδυνάσθαι ἐν τῇ φλογί

 1854) The evidence in Günther, Symbolik 4, p. 420-423. On "hypothetical damnation" Bretschneider, Systematische Entwicklung 3 etc., p. 847 f.: "By the eternity of hell punishments the ancients understood an uninterrupted continuation of the punishments both according to their intention and extension and a constant remaining of the damned in the eternally unchanging place of punishment. ... The numerous attacks on the church conception, however, caused the newer ones to assume the possibility and probability of the improvement of the damned and then also an improvement of their condition, to drop the absolute eternity of the punishments in hell and to assume either only a hypothetical eternity of the same, that is, under the condition that the damned would not improve in eternity, that is, to declare them to be eternal only in the case of the damned, who would never be made better by the punishment, or to hold them to be only relatively eternal, that is, in the relation that the damned would always lag behind the perfection and salvation of the pious, even if they improved and became happier, and would feel the eternity of their punishment by the fact that they would forever have set themselves back in virtue and happiness."

1855) 1 Tim. 6:16: φως οίκων ἀπόσιτον; Rom. 11:33. 34: ανεξερεύνητα τα κρίματα ἀν τὸν καὶ ανεξιχνίαστοι αἱ ὁδοὶ αὐτῶν — τις συμβολὸς αὐτῶν ἐγένετο.

1856) Cf. the prelude Matt. 17:4: καλὸν ἐστὶν ἡμᾶς ὥδε εἶναι.

(Luke 16:24), being thrown into hell, into the fire that does not go out, since their worm does not die and the fire does not go out, εἰς τὴν γέενναν, εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἄσβεστον, ὅπου ὁ σκώληξ αὐτῶν οὐ τελευτᾷ καὶ τὸ πῦρ οὐ σβέννυται (Mark. 9:43-44), where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, ἐκεῖ ἐστὶ κλαν&μός καὶ ὁ βρηνγμός τῶν ὀδόντων (Matt. 8:12; 13:50, etc.). To illustrate the fact that being rejected from God's presence entails the greatest torment, the torment of a fish out of water has been recalled. But the difference is that the fish outside the water soon dies, while the man who remains outside the fellowship of God is kept alive by God's judgment, "is guilty of eternal judgment" ἐνοχός ἐστιν αιωνίου κρίσεως, Mark. 3:29.

Here still individual questions have been treated. With regard to the question whether the fire of hell is to be grasped materially or immaterially, Gerhard recommends the επέχειν, although he personally leans towards the immaterial version (magis propendemus).¹⁸⁵⁷⁾ Quenstedt advocates¹⁸⁵⁸⁾ more decidedly the immaterial version, on the grounds that "Scripture is wont to speak of the things of the world to come in terms that belong to this life, just as it describes the joys of heavenly life as a wedding and a banquet, Matt. 8:11; Luke 22:30." Therefore Quenstedt also wants to grasp the fire of hell as a figurative designation of the greatest torment. "Confirmed is this opinion from Is. 66:24: 'Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched.' But as the worm is constituted, so is the fire. By the fire is signified figuratively (metaphorice) the utmost pain."¹⁸⁵⁹⁾ As a rule, ancient theologians conclude their discussion of this question with the remark, "It is better to be more concerned about how we escape eternal fire through true repentance than to argue idly about the nature of fire."¹⁸⁶⁰⁾ What is certain is that there are no atheists in hell because the damned actually experience God as the righteous judge. The thought that there is no God, with which men on earth deceived themselves and others, can no longer arise in hell. — The question has been dealt with whether incessant sinning is to be ascribed to the damned. It must be said that because the damned remain moral beings subject to God's law

1857) *L. de inferno*, § 69.

1858) *Systema* 1715, I, 820 sqq.

1859) l. c., p. 823.

1860) Gerhard, l. c..

and yet are not of the nature that God's law wants them to be, there is incessant sin on their part. The opinion that the punishments of hell would serve as a means of purification (hypothetical damnation) is just as contrary to Scripture as the other, that they could act as a means of *annihilation*. But whether the damned will have room to blaspheme God incessantly even by outward acts, a part of the old Lutheran theologians dare not say. They rightly refer to the words of Revelation 16:11: "They blasphemed God in heaven because of their pains and their sores" to the behavior of the wicked in earthly life. As a general rule, it should be noted that we do not indulge in imagination when describing the condition of the damned according to soul and body, but stay within the limits of the scriptural expressions.

Degrees in torment according to the gravity of sins are clearly taught in Scripture. Matt. 11:22: "It will be more tolerable (ἀνεκτότερον) for Tyre and Sidon at the Last Judgment than for you." The most severe punishment is inflicted on those who despise the abundantly preached Gospel, as Christ testifies in regard to Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum.¹⁸⁶¹⁾

As far as the place of damnation is concerned, however, it is highly recommended to refrain from any geographical or other determination of the place. This is what the Lutheran theologians want to express by speaking of a "somewhere" of hell, ποῦ *inferni sive damnatorum*. They refuse to grasp this ποῦ as a certain physical place, because the Scriptural ground for this is lacking. Quenstedt says: "Where that ποῦ is, is not certain. Some place it in the world, and certainly in the center of the earth, like the Papists; others say it is outside the world, which is also probable."¹⁸⁶²⁾ In Positive Exposition we should be content to say that hell is where God shows Himself to the damned in His eternal punitive justice, by eternal banishment from His presence.¹⁸⁶³⁾ Also here the old

1861) Matt. 11:16-24. 1862) I, 810.

1863) Hutter, *Libri Conc. Explic.*, p. 945 sqq, after dismissing erroneous determinations of location: *Purior et vere orthodoxa illa est sententia, quae statuit, infernum minime omnium definiendum esse per locum aliquem physicum sive corporalem sive per ullam aliam huius universi partem, sed extra hoc universum per spirituale quoddam, illocalet et prorsus incorporeum systema sive πον, ubi, in quo perpetui furoris divini cruciatus tum in corpora, tum*

Lutheran theologians, following the processes of church fathers, added the practical thought that we should not be concerned both with the location of hell and with how we might escape from it. Quenstedt quotes Chrysostom: *Recte Chrysostomus: Μη ζητώ μεν που εστιν, άλλα πώς φεύγω μεν.*

The cause of eternal damnation. Since Christ in his substitutionary atonement is the propitiation for the whole world's sin, according to the explicit explanation of Scripture the situation is that, as on the one hand only faith saves, so on the other hand only unbelief actually condemns, Joh. 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; he that believeth not the Son (ο ἀπειθών τῷ νίῳ) shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him"; Mark. 16:16: "He who does not believe (ο ἀπιστήσας) will be condemned." We can summarize the factual situation like this: All sins, original and actual, are admittedly condemnable in themselves (*natura sua, ut sic, meritorie*). This is to be held against all diminishers of sin. But actually (*actu*) only unbelief condemns. This is to be held against all diminishers of the work of Christ, namely, the complete reconciliation of all men with God, which Christ effected by the *satisfactio vicaria*. Quenstedt:¹⁸⁶⁴⁾ *Licet omnia peccata ut sic sint causa meritoria damnationis, formalis tamen, propria, immediata et adaequata damnationis causa est finalis ἀπιστία seu incredulitas, quae non solum meretur, sed et actu infert aeternam mortem ac damnationem, vi dictorum Marc. 16:16; Ioh. 3:18. 36. [Google]* But where there is unbelief, all other sins again take on their condemnatory character. This is taught by the Scriptures in the passages where, besides unbelief, they also mention the other sins as the cause of condemnation, as Eph. 5:6: "For these things" (fornication, impurity, covetousness) "the wrath of God cometh upon the children of unbelief." ¹⁸⁶⁵⁾

in animas hominum saevient et grassabuntur. Quemadmodum vix versa coelum sive sedes beatorum non est ullus locus corporeus sive physicus, nedum ulla coeli pars, sed spirituale quoddam et illoca τοῦ sive ubi, in quo electi aeterna felicitate et ineffabilibus gaudiis perfundentur. Ceterum ubi illud sit inferni systema futurum, imo ubi iammodum sit, certe definire non possumus, praesertim cum Scriptura ipsa hac de re nihil aperte pronuntiet. [Google]

1864) I, 807.

1865) Cf. Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Rev. 22:15.

The purpose of the Scripture teaching of eternal damnation. The purpose for which the awful fact of eternal damnation is taught in Scripture is to warn against unbelief toward the gospel and to warn against carnal security and thus deliverers from eternal damnation. When John the Baptist preaches, "His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire [πυρί ἀσβέστοϛ]", this proclamation stands in the service of his sermon: "Repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" ¹⁸⁶⁶⁾ When Christ refers to the fact that "many shall come from the morning and from the evening, and shall sit with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," ¹⁸⁶⁷⁾ it is to warn "the children of the kingdom" against the way of the law in which they walked. When Christ admonishes that it is better to cut off the offending hand and foot than to go to hell, the fire that does not go out, ¹⁸⁶⁸⁾ he also wants to remind those who are already in the faith of the necessity of the unsparing crucifixion of the flesh and thus save them from eternal ruin. The same purpose is served by the statement about Judas: "It had been good for that man if he had not been born", ¹⁸⁶⁹⁾ as well as the statement about the "wicked servant" whom the Lord surprises with his future for judgment: He "will crush him and will give him his reward with the hypocrites; there will be his weeping and gnashing of teeth". ¹⁸⁷⁰⁾ Even when Paul writes, "But you according to your hardened and impenitent heart heap wrath upon yourself for the day of wrath," according to wording and context, this is an exhortation to repentance, and the apostle's purpose is to save from the wrath of the day of wrath. All theologians who treat the Scriptural doctrine of eternal damnation as a disputable fact, left up to the evaluation of the theologians, and who therefore partly deny eternal damnation absolutely, partly want to substitute doctrines for it that are "more worthy of God" and better suited to the "human consciousness", including the "Christian consciousness", teach contrary to this purpose.

1866) Matt. 3:12. 2.

1867) Matt. 8:11. 12.

1868) Mark. 9:43 ff.

1869) Matt. 26:24.

1870) Matt. 24:48-51.

Such doctrines are said to be: the destruction of the ungodly, "hypothetical damnation," the possibility of a probation after death, and so on. On the other hand, the Christian theologian has to note that in Scripture the doctrine of eternal damnation is not submitted to human criticism, but is taught as an incontrovertible fact, which therefore also the Christian church has to proclaim unconfirmed and without apology both to the world and in its own midst. The "merciful theologians" (*miseriordes theologi*) — so the deniers and critics of the Scriptural doctrine of eternal damnation have been called¹⁸⁷¹⁾ — are indeed among the most merciless of people. Instead of warning and thus delivering from hell, they, as much as there is in them, sink mankind into eternal perdition. — The Calvinist doctrine, according to which God's will is of a two-part nature from the outset, namely in such a way that God wants to glorify his grace in one part of mankind and his punitive justice in the other, also contradicts the purpose for which the doctrine of eternal damnation is taught in Scripture. That this doctrine contradicts Scripture and, by its nature, leads to despair and thus to eternal damnation, has been repeatedly explained.¹⁸⁷²⁾ Admittedly, eternal damnation ultimately serves to illustrate the punitive justice of God. But this happens against the first and original will which God has in relation to all men for Christ's sake. The necessary has already been said about the objection that through this time relations would be transferred to the eternal God.¹⁸⁷³⁾

8. Eternal salvation. [^] (*De beatitudine aeterna*)

The fact of eternal salvation. That there is an eternal salvation, which consists in the beholding of God, and in which man is saved according to soul and body, is known only from God's revelation in the Word of God, namely from the Gospel of Christ. Just as natural theology knows nothing of the incarnation of the Son of God, it also knows nothing of an eternal salvation that the incarnate Son of God acquired for men through his *satisfactio vicaria*, and which is granted to

1871) Quenstedt I, 828. 1872) [II, 21 ff.](#), [54](#), [612](#); III, 139 ff.

1873) [II, 38 ff.](#)

those who believe in Christ. The Christian doctrine of eternal salvation must not be confused with the pagan doctrine of the immortality of the soul.¹⁸⁷⁴⁾ Paul says of all heathens, even of the scientifically educated, who, like Plato and others, have made considerations about the immortality of the soul,¹⁸⁷⁵⁾ that they had no hope (ἐλπίδα μη ἔχοντες, Eph. 2:12). That the hope of eternal salvation is only present in connection with faith in the gospel of Christ is already expressed in John 3:16: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

The essence of eternal salvation (*forma beatitudinis aeternae*). Eternal salvation consists in seeing God, that is, man is saved by seeing God. While believers in this life know God only through His Word, that is, in the image (*cognitio Dei abstractiva*), God reveals Himself to the saved without image and cover, face to face, directly (*cognitio Dei intuitiva*). That this beholding of God is the cause of salvation, because by it man is completely irradiated by the glory of God according to soul and body, the Scripture expressly teaches 1 John 3:2: "We are now" (νῦν, in this life) "God's children, and it has not yet appeared" (ἐφανερώθη, become manifest) "what we shall be. But we know when it shall appear, that we shall be like him (ὁμοιοι); for we shall see him as he is." 1 Cor. 13:8-12 compares the knowledge of God that Christians have in this life through God's Word with the knowledge of God that Christians have in that life through seeing God, and declares the latter perfect in comparison with the former, v. 12: "We see now through a mirror in the dark Word (ὅς ἐσὸπρον ἐν αἰνίγματι), but then face to face.

1874) The evidence for the immortality of the soul has been cultivated with special interest by the rationalists. Cf. Bretschneider, *Handbuch der Dogmatik* 4, II, 357 ff. Characterization of these proofs in Hase, *Hutt. rediv.*, § 139 [*sic*: § 129]: "With the possible contradiction that can be opposed to each of these proofs, the belief in an eternal life is to be founded from Christ and not from philosophical demonstrations or doubtful histories. Therefore, you will also find a stronger faith in eternal life in the poor farmer's hut than in the lecture halls of great philosophers."

1875) Cf. on the belief in the immortality of the soul among the heathens, especially among Greeks and Romans, the first book in Cicero's *Tuscul. Disputt.*

Now I know in part" (ἐκ μέρους, fragmentary), "but then shall I know even as also I am known." Rightly do the ancient theologians speak of the [visio Dei beatifica](#) in the exposition of the salvation. It is also rightly added that by the *visio beatifica* all apostasy from God is excluded. Apart from the fact that there are no more tempting powers in heaven — for these are thrown into the lake of fire forever, Revelation 20:10 —, the saved will enjoy God so perfectly by seeing God face to face that *eo ipso* every desire for another good is absolutely excluded.¹⁸⁷⁶ With regard to the manner of seeing God, the question has been raised whether it will be done with the bodily eyes ([visio corporalis](#)) or merely with the spirit ([visio mentalis](#)). The scriptural expressions "face to face" and: "They (αὐτοί) will see God" etc. state the *visio corporalis*, that is, seeing with the bodily eyes. The possibility should not grieve a Christian seriously.¹⁸⁷⁷ — Besides God, the saved will also recognize each other, even those who did not know each other in this life. This is already pointed out in Matt. 17:3-4.¹⁸⁷⁸ Whether the saved will also recognize the damned in hell can be left to itself.¹⁸⁷⁹ If this happens, it can be assumed that the salvation of the blessed will not be clouded, because their will is in perfect agreement with the will of God.¹⁸⁸⁰

1876) This is the *confirmatio voluntatis in bono*. Baier II, § 7-9. [Ed. — 2:186-188] Gerhard, L. de vita aet., § 75: *Quia beati Deum, summum bonum, intuitive et perfecte cognoscent, ideo etiam summo illo bono perfecte agnito per sanctum voluntatis motum inseparabiliter adhaerebunt ac proinde, ut ex mente omnis caligo ignorantiae, ita ex voluntate omnis ad malum proclivitas erit expulsa. ... Quemadmodum angeli, quia semper vident faciem Patris, qui in coelis est, Matt. 18:10, sunt in bono confirmati et a peccati periculo liberati, sic beati perfecte sancti et in bono confirmati erunt per et propter beatificam Dei visionem.* [Google]

1877) Detailed treatment also of the dogma-historical side of this question in Gerhard, L. de vita aet., § 143. 144.

1878) At the transfiguration of Christ, the disciples recognize Moses and Elijah, whom they had not seen in this life.

1879) The conversation between Abraham and the rich man, Luke 16:23 ff, belongs to the secondary circumstances that are not to be interpreted. Cf. Luther XI, 1204 ff.

1880) So Gerhard, L. de vita aet., § 148: [Voluntas beatorum divinae voluntati perfecte erit conformis](#).

More detailed description of eternal salvation. The scripture describes the salvation negatively and positively: negatively as a complete freedom from every evil,¹⁸⁸¹⁾ positively as a being filled with unspeakable joy.¹⁸⁸²⁾ That the heavenly being is described as being hidden here on earth with Christ in God already indicates that the salvation of heaven is beyond all comprehension in this life. In order to bring the glory of the inheritance at least somewhat close to us, various images taken from the relationships of this life are used in Scripture, e.g. the image of a wedding,¹⁸⁸³⁾ of a banquet,¹⁸⁸⁴⁾ of sitting on thrones.¹⁸⁸⁵⁾ That these are only images by which the spiritual joy of salvation in heaven is described in direct contrast to earthly glory is expressly stated in Scripture.¹⁸⁸⁵⁾ That the body of the Christian, that shared in the tribulation and labors on earth, will also share in the salvation in heaven is already evident from the concept of the nature of man, the resurrection, and from the descriptions of the nature of the resurrected body. The body will be a spiritual body, σῶμα πνευματικόν (1 Cor. 15:44), similar to the transfigured body of Christ, σύμμορφον τῷ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ (Phil. 3:21); he will shine like the sun, οἱ δίκαιοι ἐκλάμψουσιν ὡς ὁ ἥλιος (Matt. 13:43). Complete immortality, strength and beauty will adorn him because sin, the only cause of decay, weakness and unattractiveness,

1881) 2 Tim. 4:18; Rev. 7:16. 17; 21:4.

1882) 1 Pet. 1:8; Ps. 16:11, cf. Joh. 17:24.

1883) Matt. 25:10: "Those who were ready went in with him to the wedding", εἰς τοὺς γάμους. Rev. 19:9 in more detail the marriage of the Lamb: "Blessed find they that are called unto the supper of the Lamb, εἰς τὸ δεῖπνον τοῦ γάμου τὸν ἄρνιον."

1884) Matt. 8:11: "Many will come from the morning and from the evening and sit with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven", ἀνακληθήσονται. Luke 13:29 etc.

1885) Luke 22:30: "You shall eat and drink over my table in my kingdom, and sit on chairs (ἐπὶ θρόνων) and judge the twelve generations of Israel."

1886) Luke 22:24-30 in contrast to earthly reign; Matt. 22:30 in contrast to earthly marriage: "In the resurrection they will neither be free nor let themselves be free"; Matt. 8:12 in contrast to the weeping and gnashing of teeth in hell.

is completely dismissed.¹⁸⁸⁷⁾ The language in heaven will be the heavenly language that the apostle Paul once heard in paradise, but cannot be spoken on earth.¹⁸⁸⁸⁾

Degrees of salvation are not to be assumed, because all the blessed are completely saved, that is, each of the blessed will have full sufficiency for his person in the sight of God. However, the Scriptures give us reason to teach degrees of glory (δόξα, *gloria*) according to the diversity of work and faithfulness here on earth. This has been summarized in the Latin verse: "*Omnibus una salus sanctis, sed gloria dispar*" and rightly referred to scriptural passages like 2 Cor. 9:6 f. and Dan. 12:3.¹⁸⁸⁹⁾ Luther says about the equality of salvation and the degrees of glory:¹⁸⁹⁰⁾ "It is true that nevertheless also in that life there will be a difference, according to which they have worked and lived here. As that St. Paul was an apostle, Samuel or Isaiah a prophet and the like; the one will have higher clarity than the other, as the one has done or suffered more in his ministry. ... So every one shall have distinction and honor according to his office, and yet in all shall be one God and Lord, and one joy and salvation. According to the person no one shall be more nor have more than the other, St. Peter not more than you and I. But nevertheless there must be a difference of works. For God has not done through St. Paul what he did through Isaiah, and so on. Therefore shall every man bring his works,

1887) 1 Cor. 15:42. 43: Σπείρεται εν φθορά, εγείρεται εν αφθαρσία σπείρεται εν ατιμία, εγείρεται εν δόξῃ η σπείρεται εν άαυθενία, εγείρεται εν δυνάμει.

1888) 2 Cor. 12:4: "He [Paul] was raptured (ήρπάγη) into paradise and heard άρρητα ρήματα, α ονκ εξόν άνυ-ρόπω [namely, here on earth] λαλήσατ."

1889) 2 Cor. 9:6: Ο απείρων φειδομένως (scanty), φειδομένως καί θερίσει, καί ό απείρων επ' ενλογίας (Meyer: "with blessings, that is according to the context: abundant"), εν ενλογίαις καί θερίσει. Meyer on this passage remains somewhat unclear, but refers to Calov, who says in reference to the promise and retribution mentioned here, *Non ad ipsam vitam aeternam, sed ad praemia in vita aeterna, non ad essentialem benedictionem et gloriam, sed ad gloriae gradus referenda*. [Google] Dan. 12:3, among those raised to glory, those are especially mentioned who have led many to the knowledge of salvation and to righteousness. Cf. Keil on this passage On the point of comparison 1 Cor. 15:35 ff. see L. u. W. 1884, p. 408 ff.

1890) St. L. VIII, 1223 f.

that he may shine, and glorify God, that they may say: St. Peter has done more than I or anyone else has done. This man or woman has lived and done so much. Summa, all shall be equal before God in faith and grace and heavenly being, but distinguished in works and their glory." That degrees of δόξα will not cause envy in heaven, but only praise to God, goes without saying, since there is no more sin in heaven.

The location of the heaven of the saved is just as impossible to determine as that of hell. As the *ποῦ damnatorum* is where God shows Himself in His eternal punitive justice, so the *ποῦ beatorum* is where God gives Himself to be seen in revealed glory, πρόσωπον προς πρόσωπον. The angels, while ministering on earth, are at the same time in heaven, because in so doing they always behold (διὰ παντός) the face of God.¹⁸⁹¹⁾

As subjects of eternal salvation, that is, as those who participate in eternal salvation, Scripture names only those men who believe in Christ in this life. The description of God's love in Christ, which extends to the whole world ("God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son"), is followed by the sentence: "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life". That faith is to be thought of here, which arises in this life, is expressed in v. 18: "He that believeth not is already judged." Beyond that, there is

 1891) Matt. 18:10. Also Luke 1:19: "I am Gabriel, ο παρεστηκώς ενώπιον του Θεου." Cf. the quotation from Hutter, Note 1863. Strong answers (*Syst. Theol.*, p. 1032) to the question, "Is heaven a place?": "We answer that this is probable, for the reason that the presence of Christ's human body is essential to heaven, and that this body must be confined to place. ... As the new bodies of the saints are confined to place, so, it would seem, must be the body of their Lord." Thus Reformed Christology plays into eternal life. But Strong has not considered that in his assumption a difficulty arises to which, for example, Gerhard, *L. de vita aet*, § 170, draws attention to: *Beati, qui in una coeli extremitate mansionem suam habent, ad alios in altera extremitate habitantes raro ac tarde commeabunt propter maximam utriusque distantiam, ac si Christus in una coeli extremitate versetur, reliquis beatis in altera parte opposita degentibus suavissimo ipsius conspectu et colloquio carendum erit, et quae sunt huius generi alia, quae ex puerili illa de coelo beatorum cogitatione colligi possunt.* [[Google](#)]

no revelation in the Scriptures, and a Christian teacher should not dare to raise hopes of conversion after this life, or even to grant salvation to heathens on the basis of an *iustitia naturalis et civilis*.¹⁸⁹²⁾ The *necessitas fidei in hac vita ad salutem in futura vita consequendam* [Google] also underlies Christ's command to his church to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins in his name among all peoples, εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Luke 24:47), so as to "open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the image of Satan unto God, to receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance with them which are sanctified, through faith that is in me, πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμέ.¹⁸⁹³⁾ That faith matters in this life is further based on 1. the exhortation addressed to all ministers of the Word to perform their office diligently and faithfully, lest through indolence and unfaithfulness they become guilty of the eternal ruin of souls;¹⁸⁹⁴⁾ 2. the exhortation, applicable to all Christians, to take care of the sinning brethren, who stand in danger of losing their souls, with instruction, exhortation and punishment;¹⁸⁹⁵⁾ 3. the exhortation, also applicable to all Christians, to lead a blameless life before the world, so that they do not become guilty of the eternal ruin of the world by giving offense.¹⁸⁹⁶⁾

 1892) So the old and new Unitarians ([Günther, Symbolik 4, p. 115](#)), Zwingli in his *Expositio Fidei* (Niemeyer, p. 61), also newer theologians like Hofmann, who ([Schriftbew.² I, 568 f.](#)) on the basis of God's self-attestation in the conscience ascribes to the heathen "a behavior against God", "which he will repay on the day of that judgment.... with the reward of eternal life". Cf. on the other hand Apol. 91, 22 ss, Luther against Zwingli's transfer of Hercules, Theseus, Socrates, etc., to heaven, [St. L. XX, 1766 f.](#) The difficulties which arise here for human consideration have been pointed out in II, 35 f.. Cf. the remarks on 1 Pet. 3:18 ff. [II, 374 ff.](#)

1893) Acts 26:18. Meyer on this passage correctly remarks that πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμέ belongs to λαβεῖν and is placed with great emphasis at the end.

1894) Ezek. 3:18.19: "The wicked will die because of his sin, but his blood I will require at your hand. But where thou warnest the wicked, and he turneth not from his ungodly ways, he shall die for his sin, but thou hast saved thy soul." New Testament passages: 2 Tim. 4:1. 2; 2:23-26; 1 Tim. 4:15. 16.

1895) Matt. 18:15-17.

1896) Matt. 18:7: "Woe to the world of offence! There must be offence: but woe to that man by whom offence cometh!"

The purpose of the scriptural doctrine of eternal salvation. As the doctrine of eternal damnation has the purpose of warning against unbelief and carnal security, and thus of saving from eternal damnation, so the scriptural doctrine of eternal salvation has the purpose of provoking to faith in the gospel and of maintaining in that faith, and thus of serving the attainment of salvation. A Christian life is not even conceivable without constant orientation by the certain hope of eternal life.¹⁸⁹⁷⁾ We must not forget that Christians here on earth, just like Christ Himself, are not valued and treated according to their high status.¹⁸⁹⁸⁾ So that they do not grow weary in this misjudgment and the tribulation associated with it, they keep their eyes fixed on eternal salvation in heaven, in accordance with Christ's instruction.¹⁸⁹⁹⁾ In particular, the teachers of the doctrine in church and school here on earth do not enjoy the recognition they deserve. The gospel of the crucified Christ has never been popular with the world,¹⁹⁰⁰⁾ and it will remain so until the Last Day.¹⁹⁰¹⁾ But in all this, even they do not grow weary, but carry off a shining victory,¹⁹⁰²⁾ if they keep their eye on the heavenly inheritance (παράθήκη) according to the example of the apostle:¹⁹⁰³⁾ "I am not ashamed, for I know in whom I believe, and am sure that he is able to keep my inheritance for me until that day." Luther: "We have the promise and hope of the kingdom of heaven, and the recompense and retribution of this misery of ours will be so great that we will also reproach ourselves greatly that for the sake of such contempt and ingratitude of the world we will ever

1897) Cf. Luther's sermon on Tit. 2:13 [St. L., IX, 930 ff.](#) This important truth has already been treated in the doctrine of the Christian life under the section: "The Christian life a life in the expectation of the Last Day", p.103 ff.

1898) 1 Joh. 3:2: τέκνα θεον εσμεν.

1899) Matt. 5:12: "Be joyful and confident, it shall be your reward in heaven", ὁ μισθὸς ὑμῶν πολὺς ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

1900) 1 Cor. 1:23: Ἰουδαίοις μὲν σκάνδαλον, Ἑλλήσι δὲ μωρία.

1901) 2 Tim. 4:1-8. Description of the time until the appearance of Christ for judgment. V. 4: "There will be a time when they will not suffer (ἀνέχεσθαι) sound doctrine."

1902) Rom. 8:37: νικησόμεθα.

1903) 2 Tim. 1:12.

have dropped a tear or a sigh. Why, we will say, have we not suffered something more severe? I never would have believed that there could be such surpassing glory in eternal life; else I should not have so dreaded to suffer even much worse things."¹⁹⁰⁴⁾ From this practical point of view, the Christian dogmatist, like the whole Christian doctrine, has to teach eschatology in particular.

1904) [St. L. II, 1237](#); Erl. *Exeg. Opp. Lat.* 9, 235.

SOLI DEO GLORIA.